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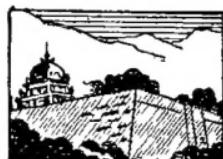
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ENGLISH STORY MAGAZINE

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| No. 1

THE OLD BOYS DAY

During her college days she was considered a raging beauty, yet five years later when she attended the college function she felt herself an utter stranger, a nonentity. The world belonged to the wealthy and the successful.

G. LEWIS B A.

The college hall was filled with mirth and cheer. Neon lights flooded the place with its soft white light. Loud music was pouring forth from concealed loudspeakers. But none seemed to listen. Everyone was busy otherwise. The last minute preparations were going on briskly inside the hall for a grand dinner. It was the Old Boys Day Meet. At the lobby groups of youths, both men and women, and dignified elderly people were found meeting and exchanging greetings in exhilarated mood. Motor cars, small and big, formed a big sinuous line outside the buildings. Everything was gay, lively and festive at that dusk hour of the evening.

Vimala was also attending the party. She was alone. She had just passed the gate. Suddenly she felt some unknown heaviness inside her. A pang.

Her limbs ached to retrace the steps and go back. Her heart began to beat faster and even in that cool December evening, tiny sparklets of sweat formed on her forehead and neck. She wiped them out softly with her kerchief. She was upset. Why should she be scared like this? She was also one of the invited, then why this unwanted fear? May be it was because she was attending this type of function for the first time. But that was not a place strange to her. It was hardly five years since she had left that college. Every stone in that institution was friendly and familiar to her. She proudly remembered those days, when everyday she passed the same gate, every eye from inside was focussed on her. Then she was the raging beauty queen of the college. Moreover she had been the brightest lady student in those years.

She had passed her B. A. with a high rank!

But today for some unknown reason she shuddered at each step. And yet she had looked forward to this function with such joy! She would meet her old friends! They may also come! But now she felt as if she had committed a blunder. She frantically tried to build up courage. "Why should I be like this? What is that I am ashamed of? I am not a parasite to anyone! I am not plundering anybody. I am not a prostitute to be ashamed of before the society. I am working myself honestly; may be, I am only a typist in the Post Office, but I am myself. I need not fear anybody for not possessing a car, or riches to show off."

Vimala frantically tried to spin together all her courage and prestige, which she thought had already been damaged. May be this is not a place for me, she thought.

With such clamouring thoughts and emotions she was dragging her steps. There were a number of people in the portico but nobody seemed to notice her. She was glad of that. At the gate she could hear a car arriving, doors slamming, laughter and approaching f o o t s t e p s . Vimala was startled when somebody in the back pushed a hand through her waist. It was the cute buxom lady Molly, her college mate and one of her best friends. She was holding her in a close embrace and was shouting in laughter.

"Hello! Vimala, my dear. It's ages since we'd met." The

maddening perfume from Molly's body stunned her breath. The shimmering brightness from the diamonds around her neck dazzled Vimala's eyes, making it appear like a dream.

"Where in the hell were you all this time? You see, I've been enquiring about you from everybody. I almost lost hope of seeing you, my dear. This is a real surprise." Molly pressed her timid friend close. Vimala was carried away by loud emotions; she could only say, "I'm so glad. How wonderful you look!"

A man's voice interrupted them. "Molly, at what time should I come back?" It was somebody from the car in which she had come.

"Oh, I think the party will end only after ten." The car roared and rolled away.

"That's my husband. Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't introduce you to him. By the way, dear, where are you now? Married?" Molly enquired. Vimala blushed to the core, feeling a sense of defeatful agony.

"Oh, no! Still going strong doing nothing!" Vimala felt her throat choking; eyes blurred. She could only sense weird darkness looming around her.

"Hello! Molly! My good heavens! I couldn't believe my eyes. You're smashing now!"

It was a stout tall man, well dressed, coming towards both the ladies. Mr. Srinivas. This was the guy who used to worry the girls during their good old college days. A real wolf! But now he had grown big, massive and dignified. He is Capt.

Srinivas now. The costly suit he wore explained his affluent life. He continued in his tough voice, "I met your brother last year in U. K. He told me that you have married and you were in Bombay.

He turned towards Vimala and after recognizing her, exclaimed, "Oh my, who's this, Vimala? I wonder where you are now? You are the same chic girl..." Thus went on his boisterous speech. He had much to say to every one about each other's position, life and affairs. Slowly a small crowd of men and women joined them. Because Capt. Srinivas was the organiser of this Old Boys Day Meet, he started introducing each of them to the two ladies, Molly and Vimala. "This is Capt. Thampi, my colleague, and this is Dr. S. K. Naidu of General Hospital; Mr. Sivaram of T.W.A. Mr. Mathews, a pilot in our civil aviation. And don't you know Mrs. Leela Bai, the youngest of our Deputy Collectors?....." That lady, a fair tall woman with a distinguished look, glanced at Vimala; an icy look. Vimala remembered her. She was far junior to her in the college. But she had successfully passed I. A. S. last year.

Then there were Mr. Lal of the Lal Mills, Ramnath attached to the Indian Embassy in U. K., some other khadi clad politicians, old professors, other staff and lot of V. I. Ps., whom nobody even dared to approach for casual talk. But the formal introductions and greetings went on. To all of those persons



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introduced to Molly, she had something or other to talk. But Vimala simply gave out her hand feeling it as if not hers, but a lifeless, dead one. Her face was like a mask; it did not betray its inner emotions.

In the midst of that cheerful meeting and laughter there came a hand to shake with, grimly concealing the irony behind it. It was the hand of Mr. Krishnamoorthy. He was the Superintendent in Post and Telegraphs. A newly appointed young officer, Vimala's superior officer. Both of them recognized each other undoubtedly. But for reasons he himself only knew that young officer did not show any recognition of her. His action freezed Vimala. For a

few moments he looked at her through his spectacles, his eyes transfixed in a manner of sarcastic hypocrisy. He too shook hands with Vimala just like others. A few silent moments skipped off. It was rather cruel on his part. He asked her: "You are employed aren't you?" It was rather very unsporting of him. Vimala felt she was humiliated. Her friend Molly was nearby. Only a few minutes ago she had told a lie to her, that she was doing nothing. She did not want to admit that she was just a clerk.

Fortunately for her there was no need to reply to the Superintendent. "We shall begin our programme." There was a stir among the crowd. Everybody was moving towards the hall and occupying selected seats along with the choicest company close by. A young gentleman came forward and dragged Molly somewhere near the stage. They were found themselves in animated conversation and well pleased with each other. Vimala felt stranded without a proper companion. She feared whether she was unwanted in that function.

On the stage, there were all the college staff, seated on either side of the president, who was the Education Minister from a neighbouring State. He was himself once an old student of the college.

As the organiser of the function, Srinivas began reading the welcome address. The hall became silent, except the echoing voice from the loud speakers.

"Hon. President, ladies and gentlemen,.....We are happy

that one of our old boys, Sri..., now Minister for Education in our neighbouring State, has himself turned up to preside over this function. Some of us will be remembering, in those days of freedom struggle our veteran president was the president of our College Union itself and I would like to remind you that he himself had been victimised and expelled from the college for having taken a leading part in the strike in our college and for kindling the fire of freedom within the students. Now we can proudly acknowledge our sincere thanks and welcome him amongst us. Our college can proudly look back and say that such pillars of society have passed through her portals. She has presented to the nation brilliant men of science, able politicians, ambassadors, administrators, educationists, soldiers and men of distinction....."

Vimala looked up. She was in a strange world. Her friend Molly was far away. Her eyes met those of Krishnamoorthy's her superior officer. He was still keeping that sarcastic look. She felt incredibly uncomfortable and uneasy. She looked at the man sitting next to her. He seemed to be deeply engrossed in the proceedings on the stage. It appeared that he was not aware of even Vimala's presence.

Vimala got up and stealthily moved out of the hall. She needed fresh air. She felt tiresome and depressed. What she wanted most was to escape from that dreary and depressing atmosphere.

With a deep sigh of relief,

she tiptoed through the verandah and got outside into the grounds. The dark dome of the immense sky greeted her. The cool air soothed her. She felt like escaping from a strange world, filled with strange people ridiculously laughing, talking and grimacing. The college itself

appeared as a strange, unfamiliar place, a different world than hers. She turned and took a last and final glance. Then with a sigh she hurried her steps to her abode of isolation.

(The characters in this story are purely fictitious and any similarity is only accidental.)

REMARK

A certain member of a country club was not popular because of ostentation and jewellery. One Sunday two club members were watching this person hack his way round the golf course.

"Weak with his clubs, isn't he?" said one.

"Yes, but strong in diamonds," remarked the other.

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BIG SISTER LIU

This is a moving and purposeful story from China laid in the days when that country was ravaged with internecine strife between war lords and pillaged by roving robber bands.

Summer was unusually hot in Peking that year. Although the street lamps were already lit, old Wu who sold cool crab-apple cider in the corner of the lane, was still announcing his wares with a rhythmic clanging of two small brass bowls. A woman with a large basket of scrap paper on her back passed before the cider vender. A large battered straw hat obscured her face, but when she hailed him, you caught a flash of even white teeth. Her burden weighed her down heavily. She walked placing one foot solemnly in front of the other, like a camel, until she entered her own gate.

Beyond was a small compound lined with one-storey buildings built in a hollow square. The woman lived in two dilapidated rooms on one side of the compound. Most of the yard was strewn with rubble, but before her door was an arbor and tuber-roses grew beneath her window. As she neared her door, a man came out and helped her lower the heavy basket.

"You're late today, my dear."

The man's name was Liu Hsiang-kao. He was approximately the same age as she—about thirty. The woman's name was Chun-tao, or Spring Peach, but her surname was also Liu. And the neighbours all referred

to her as Big Sister Liu, the scrap paper collector. That was her occupation. From morning till night beneath the blazing sun or icy gale she tramped the streets day after day collecting scrap paper for a living. The man was an assistant to Wu, the cedar seller. All that he got for his work was the rent free two room tenement and two meals.

Both of them were refugees to Peking from marauding bandits in the interior of China. They had come there five years ago and fate had thrown them together. She wanted a place to store her paper and had chanced to meet Hsiang-kao and he had gladly rented a portion of his tenement to her.

Since Hsiang-kao could read a bit, he was able to sort through the paper that Chun-tao collected and pick out the relatively valuable pieces, such as inscribed paintings or letters or scrolls written by some famous figure. With the two co-operating, business improved. Occasionally, Hsiang-kao tried to teach Chun-tao read and write, but without much success. He couldn't read very well himself and had even greater difficulty in explaining the words to others.

But to get back to the story. As Chun-tao came into the room, Hsiang-kao followed behind her

with a bucket of water.

"Wash up, my dear wife," he said happily. "I'm starving. Let's have something good to night—onion griddle cake, all-right? If you agree, I'll go out and buy the things."

"Huh! Why can't you stop calling me wife? I'm not your wife," Chun-tao said with some heat.

"If you'll only agree to it tomorrow I'll buy you a good straw hat in the second-hand market. Haven't you been saying you need one?" Hsiang-kao pleaded.

"I don't like to hear it."

Seeing that she was a little annoyed, he changed the subject. "Well, what do you want to eat?"

"Whatever you like. You buy it and I'll cook it for you."

After a while Hsiang-kao returned with some onions and a bowl of sesame seed sauce, and placed them on the table. Chun-tao had finished washing. She came in holding a large red card.

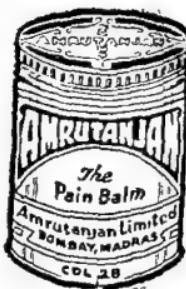
"This must be some big official's wedding certificate. Don't sell it in the small market this time. Better have some one take it to the Peking Hotel. We'll get more for it there."

"That's ours. Otherwise what right would I have to call you wife?" replied Hsiang-kao playfully. "I've been teaching you to read for nearly two years and you still can't recognize your own name!"

"Who can read so many words? And cut out this wife business. I don't like to hear it. Seriously now, who wrote this thing?"

"I did. This morning a policeman came around to check up on the tenants. He says the

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martial law has been stricter the last two days. Every family has to report exactly who is staying with them and their relationship. The policeman said it wouldn't look good if he wrote down that a man and a woman, unmarried, were living together. So I took a blank wedding certificate and filled in that we were married in 1919."

"What? 1919? I didn't even know you in 1919. You'll get us into an awful mess."

Although opposed to the idea, Chun-tao spoke calmly. She had changed to blue cloth trousers and she wore a white tunic.

Even without make-up, her face had a fresh natural beauty. Had she been willing to marry, the local matchmaker could easily have passed her off as a young widow of twenty-three or four. Chun-tao could have commanded at least a hundred and eighty dollars dowry under prevailing market conditions.

Laughing, she folded the card down the middle. "Don't fool around. A fine wedding certificate! Let's make our griddle cakes and eat." She lifted the stove lid and thrust the card into the flames. Then she walked to the table and began to knead some dough.

"You can burn it if you like," said Hsiang-kao with a grin. "The policeman has already registered us as husband and wife. If they make an official check, I'll say we lost it when we were refugees on the road. From now on, I'm going to call you wife. The police recognize our marriage. I'm going to call you wife whether you like it or not. Tomorrow I'll buy you a new hat. I'm afraid I can't afford a ring."

"Keep that up and you'll make me mad."

"Looks like you're still thinking of your husband Li Mao," Hsiang-kao said in an aggrieved tone.

"Think of him? Husband and wife for one night, then separated for nearly five years, with no news all that time. What's the good of thinking?"

She had told Hsiang-kao what had happened on her marriage day. When the flowery sedan chair brought her to the groom's

home, before the guests even had a chance to take their seats at the wedding feast, a man came rushing in to announce that an army of many soldiers had arrived in the two neighbouring villages. They were grabbing men to dig trenches and everybody was running away. The new couple hastily bundled their belongings together and fled toward the west with the rest of the villagers. Their second night on the road, they suddenly heard people ahead shouting, "The bandits are coming. Hide, quickly hide!" There was a wild scramble to get out of sight. No one had time to think of anyone but himself. When the sun rose the next morning, a dozen people had disappeared, Chun-tao's husband Li Mao among them.

"I think he must have been taken by the bandits," she now said. "May be they killed him long ago. Forget it. Let's not talk about him."

She finished making the cake and put it on the table. Hsiang-kao scooped a bowl of cucumber soup from the crockery pot. The two sat down and ate in silence.

When the meal was over, they sat beneath the arbor and chatted. A cool breeze brought tiny fireflies descending on the arbor like a myriad of falling stars, while countless real stars flashed and twinkled among the leaves of the cucumber vine. The night-blooming tuberoses slowly opened their petals and filled the garden with their perfume.

"How lovely they smell," said Hsiang-kao. He plucked one of the flowers and put it in Chun-tao's hair.

"Don't spoil my tuberoses. Wearing flowers in the hair at night—I'm no prostitute." She took the flower out, inhaled its delicate scent, then placed it on the seat beside her.

"Before she knew it, it was almost midnight. Chun-tao stood up and stretched. "I'm tired. Let's get some rest."

Hsiang-kao followed her into the house. There was a brick oven bed against the window wide enough to sleep three.

Chun-tao undressed, draped herself in a thin coverlet and lay face downwards on the bed. According to their nightly habit, Hsiang-kao massaged her back and legs. As usual, she gradually relaxed, a faint smile on her lips, as Hsiang-kao kneaded her weary muscles in the light of the oil lamp's flickering little flame.

Already half asleep, she murmured, "You come to bed too. You have to get up early tomorrow."

Soon the woman was snoring faintly Hsiang-kao put out the lamp.

At dawn they rose promptly and set off on their respective

missions like a pair of ravens leaving their nest in search of food.

Just as the noon cannon sounded, and the drums and cymbals of the fair grounds on the shores of the Ten Monasteries Lake were at their noisiest, Chun-tao came through the Houmen Arch, bearing a basket of paper on her back. As she neared the fair grounds, a man by the side of the road hailed her.

"Chun-tao; Chun-tao!"

Even Hsiang-kao seldom addressed her by her name. In the four or five years since she left the countryside, certainly no one had ever shouted it out like that in public.

"Chun-tao, don't you remember me?"

She turned to see a beggar sitting by the roadside. The piteous cry had come from him. His face was heavily bearded. He was unable to stand because he had no legs. The white metal buttons of his tattered grey uniform were already rusting and his skin showed

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through the splits in his shoulder seams. A nondescript army cap devoid of any insignia perched askew on his head.

Chun-tao stared at him wordlessly.

"Chun-tao, I'm Li Mao!"

She took two steps forward. Grimy tears were running down the man's cheeks into his tangled beard. Her heart beat wildly. For several minutes she was unable to speak.

"Mao, you're a beggar?" she said finally. "How did you lose your legs?"

He sighed. "It's a long story. How long have you been in Peking? What are you selling?"

"Selling? I collect scrap paper. We can talk after we get home."

Chun-tao called a rickshaw, raised Li Mao in and put her basket on the vehicle's floor-board. While the rickshaw-man pulled, she trotted along behind and pushed. Old Wu, standing at the head of her lane near the north wall clanging his little brass bowls hailed her as they went by.

"You're home early today, Big Sister. Business must be good!"

"A relative's come from the country," she shouted back in reply.

At the compound gate, the rickshaw man helped Li Mao down. Chun-tao opened the gate with her key, then led Li Mao in. He crawled forward on his hands, like a performing bear, his amputated legs dragging behind him.

She brought out a suit of Hsiang-kao's clothing and drew

two buckets of water from the well, just as Hsiang-kao did for her every day. She poured the water into a wooden tub and told Li Mao to bathe. After he finished, she filled another basin so that he could wash his face. Finally she helped him to a seat on the oven-bed, then went into the next room to bathe herself.

"Your place is nice and clean, Chun-tao. Do you like here alone?"

"My partner stays here too," she answered without any hesitation.

"Are you in business?"

"Didn't I tell you I collect scrap paper?"

"Collect scrap paper? How much can you earn in a day doing that?"

"Never mind questioning me. Let me hear about you first." Chun-tao spilled out the bath water and came into the room, combing her hair.

Li Mao began his story:

"Chun-tao—ah, it's too long. I'll just tell you the main things. After the bandits captured me that night, I hated them because they had made me lose you. I watched for my chance, grabbed one of their rifles, killed two of them and ran for my life. I managed to get to Shenyang just when they were recruiting for the army, and I joined up. All during the next three years I kept trying to get news from home. Two months ago we were northeast of Pingku and I was on patrol duty. I ran into the enemy and was hit in both legs. I was rushed to a field hospital in

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Peking. The doctor had to amputate.

"I was in the hospital for more than a month. I pulled through alright, but my legs were amputated. When I was discharged all I could do was beg on the streets. Lately I've been thinking I can't stand this much longer; it would be better to hang myself and get it over with."

Chun-tao listened intently. Her eyes were moist but she said nothing. Li Mao paused to wipe the sweat from his brow.

"And what about you?" he asked. "Though this place is kind of cramped compared with our broad, open countryside, from the looks of things you're doing all right."

"Who's doing all right? No matter how bad things are, a person still had to live. You can see people with smiles on their faces even at the gates of hell. I've been collecting scrap for a living, the past few years. A fellow by the name of Hsiang-kao is my partner. He and I share everything."

"You and he live here together?"

"Yes, we both sleep on this oven-bed," Chun-tao replied without the least hesitation, as if she had definite views on the subject for a long time.

"Oh, then you're married to him?"

"No, we just live together."

"In that case, are you still my wife or aren't you?"

"No, I'm not anybody's wife."

Li Mao's pride as a husband

was hurt, but he couldn't think of what to say. His eyes were fixed on the ground, not that he was looking at anything of course, but because he was rather ashamed to face his wife.

"Everyone must be laughing at me for a cuckold," he said at last in a low voice.

"Cuckold?" The woman's face hardened a bit at the word, but she spoke without rancour. I'm independent now. Whatever I do can't have any effect on you."

"But we're still married, hundred days of bliss—"

"I don't know anything about any hundred days of bliss," Chun-tao interrupted. "Several hundred days of bliss have passed since then. Nearly five years without a word. I'm sure you never dreamed we'd meet again either. I was here alone. I had to live. I needed someone to help me. After living together with him all these years, of course, I don't feel the same about you any more. I brought you home today because our fathers were friends, because we come from the same village. You may claim I'm not so sure you'll win."

Li Mao fumbled at the pouch in his belt as if searching for something. But then he stopped and stared at Chun-tao and his hand dropped back and rested on the mat covering of the brick bed.

Li Mao was silent. Chun-tao wept. The shadows on the floor softly lengthened.

"Alright, Chun-tao, if that's

how you want it. I'm a cripple. Even if you came back to me, I couldn't support you," Li Mao said sensibly.

"I can't throw you over because you're crippled. But I can't give him up either. Why don't we all just live here and no one think about who's supporting whom, what do you say?" Chun-tao, too, spoke the words that were in her heart.

Li Mao's stomach rumbled faintly.

"Oh here we've been talking all this time and I haven't even asked you what you'd like to eat. You must be terribly hungry."

"Anything at all. I haven't eaten since last night. I only had some water."

"I'll buy something." As Chun-tao hurried from the house Hsiang kao gaily entered the courtyard. They collided under the arbor.

"What are you so happy about?" she asked him. "Why are you home so early?"

"I did some good business today. This morning I went through that load of paper you brought home last night, and what did I find but some Ming Dynasty petitions sent to the Emperor of China by the King of Korea—ten of them, worth at least fifty dollars a piece! I just took a few down to the exchange to see what they'll bring from the customers; I'll take some more down later. I also found two stamped sheets of paper that the experts say are Sung Dynasty. I've been offered sixty dollars for them already, but I was afraid to sell. May be that's too cheap. I brought

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them back to let you take a look. See.....”

He undid the cloth wrapper of his bundle and took out the documents and the stamped paper. “This is the imperial seal,” he pointed at the stamped imprint.

“Except for that mark, I don’t see anything special about this paper. Fine foreign paper is much whiter,” said Chun-tao. “Those Palace officials must be as blind as I am.”

Hsiang-kao laughed. “If they weren’t a little blind how could people like us earn a couple of dollars now and again?”

He retied the bundle. “I say, wife—”

Chun-tao glanced at him sharply. “I told you not to call me that.”

Hsiang-kao ignored her tone. “You’ve come home early too. Business must be not bad. Say, it isn’t often that we’re both home together in the afternoon. Why don’t we take a stroll around the fair grounds at Ten Monasteries Lake?”

He went into the house and put his bundle on the table. Chun-tao followed him in. “We can’t,” she said. “We have a visitor today.” Raising the door curtain of the inner room, she nodded to Hsiang-kao, “Go on in.”

He walked into the next room with Chun-tao right behind him. “This is my former husband,” she said to Hsiang-kao, and to Li Mao she said, “This is my partner.”

The eyes of the two men met. Neither man spoke. Even the two flies resting on the window

sill were silent. The room remained hushed for several moments.

“Your name, sir?” asked Hsiang-kao courteously. Of course, he knew very well.

They began to chat.

“I must go out and buy a couple of things,” said Chun-tao. “You probably haven’t eaten either,” she said to Hsiang-kao. “Will griddle cakes be alright?”

“I’ve eaten. You stay here. I’ll do the buying.”

Chun-tao pushed him to a seat on the brick bed. “You stay here and entertain the guest,” she insisted with a smile and went out.

The two men were left alone in the room. In a situation like that, if they hadn’t liked one another on sight, they might have fought to the death. Fortunately, they had formed a mutual liking.

“Now that you husband and wife are reunited again, I’ll leave of course,” said Hisang-kao reluctantly.

“No. I’ve been away from her so long. And now I’m a cripple. I couldn’t support her. It wouldn’t be any use. You’ve lived together all these years. Why break up? I can go to a home for the disabled. I hear there’s one here. I can get in if I can make the right connections.”

Hsiang-kao was surprised. He hadn’t expected such magnanimous conduct from a man he had considered a rough soldier.

“That’s not right,” replied Hsiang-kao. “I don’t want to be known as a wife-stealer. And thinking of it from your angle, you shouldn’t let your wife live

with another man."

"I'll write a paper disowning her, or I'll give you a bill of sale! Either way will do," Li Mao said with a smile.

"How can you disown her? She hasn't done anything wrong. I don't want her to lose face. As for buying her—where would I get the money?"

"I don't want any money."

"What do you want?"

"I don't want anything."

"Then why write a bill of sale?"

"Because if we just agree verbally you won't have any proof. I might be sorry later and change my mind, that would

make things awkward. Excuse me for talking so frankly, but that's the best way to get this thing settled. We can save the polite chatter for later."

Chun-tao returned with the sesame seed buns she had bought. Seeing the two men talking together so freely, she was very happy.

"I've been thinking a lot lately about finding another person to help us," she said to Hsiang-kao. "Now by a lucky coincidence, Mao has shown up. He can't walk, but he'll be fine at home, sorting through the paper. You can be our outside salesman, I'll still do the collecting. The



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three of us will be a business company.

Li Mao made no reply, but picked up a sesame seed bun and began wolfing it down. It was as if he had just come back from the world of the starving and had no time for talk.

Days passed without any hitch. But two men and women sleeping together on a single brick oven-bed of course was very awkward.

Coming home one day, Chun-tao found Hsiang-kao waiting for her as usual. It was already late, and as she entered the house she could smell incense burning. And on the table was a red card.

"Who does this red card on the table belong to?" Chun-tao asked picking it up.

"We talked it over today," said Li Mao from the brick bed. "You go to Hsiang-kao. That's the contract of sale."

"Oh, so you've got it all settled among yourselves! Well, and I say it's not up to you two to dispose of me!" She walked over to Li Mao with the red card. "Was this your idea, or his?"

"It's what we both want. The way we've been living, I'm not happy and neither is he."

"We talk and talk and it's still the same question. Why must you two always think about this husband and wife business?" Angrily, she tore the card to bits. "How much did you sell me for?"

"We put down a figure just for the look of things. No real man gives his wife away for nothing."

"But if he sells her, that makes everything alright, does it?" She walked out to Hsiang-kao and said: "You've got money now. You can afford to buy a wife. Why not spend a little more and—"

"Don't talk like that, don't talk that," Hsiang-kao pleaded. "You don't understand, Chun-tao. The last few days, the people in the trade have all been laughing at me..."

"If anyone laughs at you, why don't you hit him? What are you afraid of? What we do is nobody else's business."

Hsiang-kao was silent.

"Let's not talk about this any more. Why can't the three of us go on living as we are?"

The room was still. After the evening meal Li Mao and Chun-tao sat beneath the arbor but both were unusually quiet.

"I can see that you like him a lot," he said in a low voice. "You'd better live with him. When you get a little money scraped together, you can send me back to the country, or to a home for disabled soldiers."

"It's true these last few years we've been living together, we've been getting along fine," Chun-tao replied softly. "If he were to go, I'd miss him terribly. Let's ask him in and see what he thinks."

"Hsiang-kao, Hsiang," she called from the window. No response came. She went outside. Hsiang-kao was not there. This was the first time he had ever gone out at night alone. Chun-tao was stunned. She called toward the house:

"I'll go and look for him."

She was sure Hsiang-kao had only gone up to the corner. But when she asked old Wu, the old man said he had seen him going toward the main street. She went to all of his usual haunts, but Hsiang-kao was nowhere to be seen. It's very easy to lose a person. Once they get out of sight, they disappear without a trace.

It was nearly one in the morning when Chun-tao, heavy-hearted, returned home.

The oil lamp in the room was already extinguished.

"Are you asleep? Has Hsiang kao come back yet?" she asked. Striking a match, she lit the lamp and peered at the brick bed. A chill of terror ran through her veins. Li Mao had hanged himself with his belt from

the top of the window lattice. She managed to control herself sufficiently to climb up and lower him to the bed. Fortunately he was not dead. Luckily for him, she had come back at the nick of the moment. By kneading his chest, she gradually was able to revive him.

Although Chun-tao didn't love him, she had a strong sense of duty to wards him. She comforted and reassured him, talking to him until the sky turned bright. At last he slept and Chun-tao got down off the bed.

All that day she didn't go out of the house. In the evening, she sat beside Li Mao on the brick bed.

"Why are you crying?" she asked him. Tears were rolling down his cheeks.

"I've wronged you. What

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did I come here for?"

"Nobody's blaming you."

"Now he's gone, and I haven't any legs--"

"You mustn't think like that. He'll come back."

"I hope so."

Thus another day passed. Next morning she donned her battered straw hat and fastened her basket on her back.

"You're in low spirits today, don't go out," Li Mao said to her through the window.

"I feel worse sitting around the house."

Slowly, she walked through the gate. Work was part of her very being. Even though she was depressed and unhappy, she still wanted to work. Work is the only thing Chinese women seem to understand. They don't seem to understand love. All their attention is concentrated on the routine problems of life. Love's flowering is only a blind, stifled stirring in their hearts. All the same she felt an unaccountable pain in her heart.

She wandered from one lane to the next. Endless dust, endless streets engulfed the downcast young woman. "Matches for scrap paper!" she called occasionally. Yet at times she walked by a pile of discarded paper without giving it a glance. Once or twice, when she was supposed to give two boxes of matches in payment, Chun-tao gave five. After muddling through the day, she returned home. At the gate she saw the new residents' identification card which the police had posted, stating that Hsiang-kao and she, his wife, were the residents-in-charge. The

pressure on her heart grew heavier.

As she entered the courtyard, Hsiang-kao came running out of the house.

Chun-tao's eyes went wide. "You've come back! . . ." she cried, and then she couldn't speak for the choking tears.

"I can't leave you. Everything I have I owe to you. I know you want me to help you with your work. I can't be so callous."

He had been drifting about aimlessly for two days. His feet seemed to be dragging heavy iron fetters, fastened at one end to Chun-tao's wrist.

"Brother Hsiang-kao and I have talked it over," said Li Mao. "He's the resident-in-charge; I'm the sub-tenant. You're our wife."

She made no reply but went into the house, hung up her hat, and took her daily bath. Later she and Hsiang-kao as usual sat under the arbor. They agreed that after they sold that paper from the Imperial Palace, they would use some of the money to set up a stall for Hsiang-kao in the public market: perhaps they could also find a somewhat roomier place to live, too.

A moth, flying into the house from the arbor, snuffed out the old lamp's tiny flame. Li Mao was fast asleep, for the Milky Way was already low in the sky.

"We ought to sleep too," the woman said.

"You get into bed first. I'll come and massage you in a minute."

"You don't have to. I didn't walk very far today. We have

to be up early tomorrow. Don't forget to take care of that business. We haven't shown a profit for days."

"Say, I forgot to give it you. On the way home today, I made a special trip to the second-hand market and bought you a hat that's practically new. What do you think of it?" Groping, Hsiang-kao found the hat and handed it to her.

"How can I see anything in the dark? I'll wear it tomorrow anyhow."

A hush fell on the courtyard. The scent of tuberoses wafted lazily on the night's gentle breeze. In the room soft voices could be faintly heard.

"Wife...."

"I don't want to hear it. I'm not your wife...."

—Chinese Literature.

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ENCOUNTER AT THE STATION

Alighting from the train Ram's eyes happened to catch a glimpse of a lovely young woman and his curiosity got the better of him.

MAHALINGA PADMANABHAN, B.A., B.L.

"I say Ram, this is the limit ! Isn't it the third time you are washing that blasted face of yours ? Whoever do you expect to see at the station ? Looks as if somebody is simply perishing to see you . . . , " shouted my brother-in-law Subbu.

"Shut up, you fool." I cut him short and shoved myself into that miserable hole which goes under the dignified name of bathroom which the leisurely railways have been pleased to provide us in the upper classes. And the water, what little I could manage, was hot enough to cook a full ton of rice ! But all the fun was in extracting it. I could have more easily drawn water from a thousand feet deep well.

"Ram ! Ram ! Wretched fellow, come out," Subbu went on roaring and pounding on the bathroom door alternately, as the train came to a halt at Madras Central.

The importunities of Subbu notwithstanding, I took my own time to get ready. "Come soon, you ass, or they will shunt you on to the carriage shed and give you a good scrub I am certain it will happen to you one of these days , " continued he. It was good he did not hear me laugh.

At last I sallied forth from the carriage on to the platform and

cast a rapid glance at what was happening around me. But I missed Subbu. I had no cause for anxiety all the same. As it always happened, he was running after the porter who had lifted our luggage and was heading towards the exit. Between me and the porter, Subbu preferred to follow the latter for obvious reasons.

It was quite a hot day. But the railway platform was a miniature world with all its diversities and unities. It had never been uninteresting to me. On the contrary, I liked loitering about the platform with or without platform tickets. But let me assure you, for no sinister reasons. I have never been so far suspected even by my worst enemies of any misdemeanour. And my visits to the Central and Egmore Stations (I am positive you will agree it is Central that is more interesting) in my college days had been comparatively fewer. I had not many cousins to give "send-offs".

Be that as it may, I had no special reason to loiter on the platform that day. I was a passenger myself and I wanted to go home. The train was late by a hundred and eighty minutes. So I proceeded along when something caught my attention as a flash of lightning would. I was

not slow to find that it issued forth from one of those distracting displays of wares of stainless steel to soaps and sweets on the platforms.

Her back was towards me but her beautiful profile impressed me like a rare flower. She was of a slender built. I could feel something happen inside me and a strong desire to have but one glimpse at that face seized me. The profile was so captivating, She wore a crepe sari of maroon shade which reminded me of just the one I had presented my wife Saroja a month ago.

I approached the side exit. But instead of going out through it I proceeded towards the main entrance. Subbu can wait, I thought. The train was already late and a few more minutes' wait won't do him any harm.

I came near where she stood. She was really good, I said to myself. I approached nearer. She was looking out for someone. I wished she would turn her face but once, if only for a second ...

There was no use waiting indefinitely. For aught I knew

she may not turn my side at all. I summoned all my courage and decided to take one look, come what may, of that face that had annihilated me.

I went nearer still and she turned. My heart slipped over many beats and came to a stop! "What have you been doing all this time?" The question was shot at me. You would have guessed properly by now. The vision I had seen was no other than my wife Saroja.

I did not know how long it took me to recover, but recover I did.

"But why are you standing here? Where is Subbu?" I managed to ask. And ignoring her sharp questioning look I ventured to say it! I could not resist doing it. "You look really grand, Saroj," I whispered.

"Don't be silly! Come on, hurry up. I have been waiting here for more than three hours," she said severely and walked away. And I followed meekly. I am not sure she did not find me out. Anyway even to day I dare not discuss it with her!



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A CONSTABLE'S SUICIDE

A constable had died of poison and the police accused his wife of murdering him and she was arrested and tried

Sukhdayal, a Christian, was a constable attached to the police station at Tejgarh in Saugor district (Madhya Pradesh), and was living with his wife Mussammat Sarabhai and a little child James (2½) who were more often than not on the sick list. A particular friend of the family, a boyhood acquaintance, was Abdul Gaffar who was also a constable. He was stationed at Tendukheda. Sukhdayal had all along been at Tendukheda but he was transferred from that place to Tejgarh while Abdul Gaffar remained at Tendukheda. Sukhdayal was very much worried by the transfer as he found Tendukheda particularly convenient to him, the more so because of the medical facilities which were available at that end for treating his ailing wife and child.

Sukhdayal and his wife appeared to be living happily to all outward appearances. There was, however, a rumour in the vicinity that Sarabhai was a bit too familiar with Abdul Gaffar. This apparently came to the notice of the authorities who had ordered the transfer probably on that account. Nevertheless Sukhdayal, if one could judge by his outward appearance and the amiable rela-

tions that still subsisted between the couple, could not bring himself to believe a word of it. However, shortly before 19-5-1932, one Kamal saw them one day quarrelling. The wife wanted to go to Tendukheda for medical attention to her throat complaint, but the husband was not agreeable to it and he specifically told her not to go to the place where Abdul Gaffar was and excite suspicion amongst outsiders. He did not stand in the way of the child James going there or herself going to any other place.

On the morning of 19-5-1932, Sukhdayal got up early and proceeded to the river with two companions for the purposes of answering the nature call. He came back to the station and then returned to his quarters between 7 and 8 a.m. for his morning tea. He partook of it which was prepared by his wife and arrived at the station and resumed his work. Shortly afterwards, he complained of dryness in the throat, giddiness and numbness in the limbs. First aid was immediately administered to him at the police station and then he was taken back to his quarters and afterwards taken to a room inside. His condition, however, grew worse and worse

and it was thought expedient to take him to Damboli. He was taken thither first in a tonga and then in a lorry which was available on the way. But three miles before the destination, Sukhdoyal breathed his last at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon in the lorry itself. His wife and son had also accompanied him, and their house had been locked by her prior to starting.

A post mortem was conducted on the body almost immediately. It was noticed that the body was hot; and the temperature persisted for five hours after death. The doctor, therefore, concluded that death would have been due to a heat stroke. The contents of the stomach and the viscera were, however, preserved and sent to the chemical examiner. Meanwhile the police suspected foul play and commenced a search of the deceased's

quarters which was conducted three days later, i.e. on 22-5-1932.

Sarabhai was ill even when she was accompanying her husband on what proved to be his last journey. Her face was swollen and at the destination she became very ill and unconscious too, a condition which was also noticed by the pastor.

The house was searched thoroughly. A bagona in which tea had been prepared was found. It was still on the oven. A small quantity of tea was also noticed in an aluminium mug in the same room. Underneath the cot in the front room was an empty cup and saucer which had probably not been used.

The contents in the bagona and the aluminium tumbler and certain medicine packets found there were sent up to the chemical examiner, who certified to the



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presence of dhatura in the viscera of the deceased and also in the liquid which was found in the aluminium tumbler, but not in that which was found in the bagona. Sarabhai said that she did not prepare tea that day as she was too ill to do so. Sukhdoyal himself, she said, had prepared it; and if anything untoward had happened, she would attribute it to the mischief of some fellow policeman who was inimically disposed towards him.

Sarabhai, however, was arrested and placed on trial for murder. There was evidence of one woman who said she saw Sarabhai giving tea to the deceased.

Two theories were in the main advanced on her behalf. It was suggested that Sukhdoyal would have had a heat stroke, which had ended fatally; and it was also put forward that he would have committed suicide in a mood of desperation.

Death by poisoning and by heat stroke give somewhat identical indications. Heat at that part of the year would be very intense in that area, and the circumstance that the body was warm up to a long time supported somewhat that theory. But the previous history of the case negatived any such plea. Sukhdoyal was in normal health before the attack of giddiness was on, and the symptoms he had were precisely those which would have been caused by dhatura poisoning. Dhatura poisoning itself occasions high temperature ranging from 106° to 108°. The high temperature in the body

was due to this fact. Dhatura poisoning is also accompanied by delirious aberration. Hence it could be established that he had died from dhatura poisoning. How did he come by it?

The poison was not accidentally administered. The chemical examiner had reported that dhatura was detected in the portions of the viscera and in the smaller utensil. It was also evident that it was administered in the form of a very fine powder rather than as a decoction. The powder must have been in the tumbler before tea was poured into it or subsequently added. It follows, therefore, that it should have been done by Sarabhai herself or self administered by Sukhdoyal himself.

The Sessions Judge of Saugor held her guilty of murder and sentenced her to death.

The High Court of Nagpur on appeal was of a different view. The Judges felt that it was a case of suicide. The motive suggested for the murder was that the woman wanted to do away with her husband with a view to carry on her liaison with Abdul Gaffar; but it was indeed very thin because it appeared that the husband himself was not quite sure about it. There had been only vague rumours to that effect. What was more probable was that Sukhdoyal himself was unhinged in mind. His wife and children were frequently ill and he was much put out when he was transferred to a station without medical facilities. His protests went unheeded. His wife too was disgruntled and did everything to confirm the

suspicion of the outside public. Everything was thus set for a weak willed man to put out his life. If he had suspected poisoning at the hands of his wife, he would have of a certainty informed those around him about it before he lost consciousness or power of speech. The subsequent conduct of Sarabhai was, if anything, exculpatory. She did not give up her wifely concern once she came to know that he was ill. She did not remove the incriminating con-

tents in the tea cup when she locked the house before her departure. A poisoner would not leave traces of poison behind.

The evidence doubtless threw a good deal of suspicion against the wife, if only by reason of the suspicion of his fellow policemen on her fidelity; but her connection with the murder had not been definitely established.

In the end, Sarabhai was acquitted.

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Wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth or goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty, therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of the God, and the image of His goodness.
—*Wisdom of Solomon.*

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THE HIDDEN TREASURE

SWAMI SIVANANDA

There was a very poor family consisting of husband, wife and a few children. They had to toil hard to earn money for their food, and often went from market to market begging for a few coins or for pieces of bread. When they received a few small coins from kind hearted people they used to buy bare necessities from the market, and enjoyed rest for a while on returning home. Often they had to go without food and comfort, lamenting their miserable condition. They dwelt between tears

and smiles, happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, pleasure and pain.

But in reality they had for their heritage a vast treasure, of which they were completely unaware! It was buried in the ground where their cottage stood. They rested upon it, slept upon it, enjoyed the little they got and lived a miserable life, ignorant of their hereditary treasure. Had they dug beneath the ground, they would have found the treasure and ended their sorrow.

The same is the plight of the



PADMINI and Sundari Bai assume the role of gypsies to escape capture
—a scene from Gemini's *Vanji-Kottai Valipan*

individual soul. Due to ignorance he is not aware of the supreme wealth of *atman* which lies beneath the bed of his causal sheath or bliss sheath. He roams in the *samsara*, enjoying the sense objects. Happiness is derived from the bliss sheath which has three *Vrittis*—*Priya*, *Moda* and *Pramoda*. *Priya* is the delight of seeing the object of desire, *Moda* is the greater delight due to possessing the object of desire, and *Pramoda* is still greater delight due to the enjoyment of the object of desire. When the tension of the mind is released by the gradual satisfaction of a desire, the intellect of man turns inwards to glimpse the bliss of *atman* through the veil of *avidya*. If he rends assunder the veil he will not be like the poor family roaming about in the market of *samsara* for the little happiness of sense pleasure which is mixed with so much humiliation, pain and affliction. Each day *jiva* in the state of deep sleep goes near the treasure but due to the veil of ignorance does not attain it.



When he digs the bed of ignorance with the spade of enquiry into the real Self, with the strength of discrimination and dispassion, he recovers the hidden treasure of *atman* and becomes *atma-samrai* or self-monarch.

VANJI-KOTTAI VALIPAN

“When the bugles blow there is a good show” is the legend one sees painted in bold letters on the vans of Gemini Pictures Circuit. In the past Gemini boss Vasan has given many great pictures. His latest release, *Vanji-Kottai Valipan*, fully justifies this claim.

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*

*

“Can I go out and play with the boy next door, Mummy?”

“No, You know I don't like him.”

“Then can I go out and fight him?”

A secluded spot, a beautiful lake, an ideal companion and naturally the picnic was memorable.

THE PICNIC

G. S. HIRANYAPPA

I am one of those who are fond of the countryside and I guess I have spent a good lot of time in camps pitched in rural areas. The gun and the rod have ever been my favourite instruments of sport, and my big station-wagon is always geared to take me and my kit into the rural unknown at a moment's notice.

But another important fact you must have in mind when you go a-hunting or on a picnic is—a girl. In this respect also, I consider myself exceedingly lucky, since Sarasa, my athletic wife, is as fond of hunting and swimming as she is of cooking and sewing. A lovely luscious cake of three-and-twenty, Sarasa's collection of jeans, shorts and slacks is well-known among her circle of friends and when she is dressed in any of these, she sends me into a fizzy of excitement, which is not to be wondered at, since Sarasa has the finest pair of feminine legs in this part of the country. Any other kind of husband might have frowned upon such tastes in his beloved, but I do not. A sportsman myself, I know that a girl who loves sports will be a healthy kind of companion to go through life with. Her cheerfulness will make for happiness at home. And Sarasa, the romping, tomboyish long-stemmed beauty of a girl that has enslaved

every heart is really a sports-woman to her finger tips. Which is one reason why I am and will always be head over heels in love with her.

Now, to return to my narrative. A friend of mine had told me of a lovely, secluded lake in a scrubby jungle forty miles due south-east of the city, an ideal spot for an outing. And I am not the one to pass such information by. With the result that on the Saturday I am speaking of, I found myself at day-break by the side of the lovely Sarasa (who was at the wheel), with our two English setters at the back in our station-wagon which was doing a good thirty miles per hour, bound for the lovely woodland lake. We had decided on a picnic.

The morning chill had not yet lifted and I had, therefore, put on my brown corduroys. My feet were encased in heavy boots, and a cashmere sweater kept me warm. But Sarasa, disdaining such precautions, had put on a pair of dazzling white shorts, and a light-blue sweater showed the contours of her lovely breasts. Her shoes were bright-red, and the easy effortlessness with which she drove the vehicle lent her an additional charm of its own. I blessed myself a thousand times for having obtained the hand of

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such a lovely girl, while the heavenly Aprasas no doubt turned green with envy at the sight of so much loveliness in what they are supposed to consider as a mere terrene world.

Sarasa is a very able driver, and aided by the very exact directions that I had received from my friend, we were able to reach our destination even before it was

eight o'clock in the morning. The sight of our vehicle at such an early hour startled the denizens of the jungle, and the birds which had gathered near the lake in large numbers set up a shrill cackle of protest. Our setters licked their chops, so to speak, at the sight of so much game and Sarasa's eyes sparkled at the sight of that lovely sheet of



SHE looks every inch a queen—Vyjayantimala in one of her greatest roles in Gemini's greatest picture *Vanji-Kottai Valipam*.

water which promised such ample scope for fun and frolic. I, of course, was beside myself with joy, and as soon as the wagon had come to a halt, kissed Sarasa repeatedly in an ecstasy of happiness. She laughingly submitted to my onslaught and hand in hand we alighted, ready to have a good day's enjoyment.

The dogs hopped about close on our heels and without much ado made a bee-line for the birds. The sight of the dogs in full cry made Sarasa tingle with joy, and she bounded after them dressed in shorts and possessed of a superb figure, she looked every inch a woodland nymph and her lovely complexion gave her the appearance of a Vedic goddess. Her easy gait had in it something

of the feline grace and made me pant with excitement. I started in pursuit and came up with her just as she reached the shores of the lake.

Running is always good for athletic young girls—it heightens their complexions and makes their loveliness seem divine. And Sarasa, my darling Sarasa, was a star attraction on the track while she was at college. So that when I came up with her in front of the cool sheet of water my beauteous babe had been transformed into a being of superhuman beauty and charm. It was a new awareness to me and I reacted swiftly to it. Taking her up in both my arms I bestowed a multitude of kisses on her face and holding her close

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to my breast, her legs dangling freely, waded knee-deep into the water. We had already kicked off our shoes and the shore bed was not slippery. Sarasa and I are both excellent swimmers and there was no fear of any mishap. The water was cool and refreshing and ideally suited to my purpose. I laughed with joy and Sarasa, with pretended mortification, for she now knew what I was up to.

It was an old trick—to give her a good ducking with all her clothes on. She strove to escape the ducking and clung to me in a gleeful effort to thwart me, but

to no avail. I dropped her lightly into the lake and caught her expertly just as her lovely supple body hit the surface. Wet all over and dripping with water, she laughed joyously as I lifted her again for another good ducking. This time the results were even more beautiful and she hit the water straight as a foil. I caught her up again and held her while two soft and sinewy arms encircled my neck.

"Let us get into our bathing suits darling," she murmured softly. Her wet body was pressed close to mine and both of us were feeling deliriously happy.



BALAJI and E. V. Saroja make a charming pair in Rajeswari Films' *Sumangali* to be released shortly

I started back with my delectable load in my arms and did not allow her to alight until we had reached our station-wagon. Our kit was still in the vehicle and we had to unpack it. The dogs had by this time returned from their futile chase, and greeted our arrival by gambolling around us, an eager look lighting up their eyes.

I set down my darling and allowed her to change her dress. Her wet clothes were by this time clinging to her body and made her look like a mermaid freshly emerged from water. Extracting a towel and some clothes from our kit she went behind the wagon and soon emerged in a two-piece bathing-suit which made her look ravishingly lovely. And in her hand was a packet of biscuits which she had purchased

the day before and which she had concealed in the towel in order to spring a surprise on me.

"Here is something for my darling," she said, giving me the biscuits and looked at me affectionately. "I shall get your breakfast ready," she whispered, as I, after nuzzling her hair, lifted her up in my arms and gazing into her soulful eyes, pressed my lips on hers. She lay still in my arms for a minute and then, gently disengaging herself, lowered herself on to the ground and went back to the wagon, lovely as a fawn, to arrange for my breakfast. The picnic had begun.

Who can say that Sarasa, my tomboy-darling Sarasa, the loveliest of playmates, is not the best of housewives as well?

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ON FLATTERY

K. V. SIRKHEEL

There is hardly anyone in the world who is not susceptible to flattery. I can say that I am always alert and on guard against its insidious charms and blandishments, and, I confess, I have been in spite of it an unconscious victim of it before I knew I was taken in. It happened only the other day in the train while I was going on tour. The man sitting opposite to me had a folded newspaper in his hands and told me that he was a struggling journalist and that he bought the paper at the stall as there was an article in it under the initial 'K' which appeared every Sunday and which greatly pleased him and he would be happy if he could attain that excellence in expression which the writer possessed. When we parted he said he was very grateful for the help he got from me which as a matter of fact saved him from starvation for the next few days. Though I did not disclose the identity of the writer to him whom he so much appreciated, I felt a secret glow of pride and pleasure at the thought that he held me as his ideal and this made myself shorter in cash that morning by five rupees. This is not the first but one of the many instances when my armour against flattery was ignominiously cracked and flattery with its twiddling fingers had tickled me in my ribs!

"A little flattery is a necessary thing," said Disraeli, the great scholar-statesman, "and when it

comes to royalty you must lay it on with a trowel." He was a man who was noted for his pre-science, sagacity and wisdom. Whatever the moralist may say about it to the contrary its timely and judicious use has helped many a climber up the ladder of life which the moralist all the time held it for him. It has been the experience in life that many a man has felt that he lost the opportunity of a lifetime for not speaking the polite and flattering word at the right moment. How many young women have borne the pangs of disappointed love just because their lovers failed to utter the right word at the psychological moment! It has been the sad story of many a man of eminence that he came down from the heights not because of the slip of his foot, but because of the slip of his tongue!

Bacon, the great philosopher, has paid a compliment to this soothing opiate by his observation that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. According to him there is an element of hero worship in it. You raise the man to the heights and look upon him as, what I may call, your 'beau-ideal' and love to imitate him in his dress, deportment, style of speech or writing and even thinking and thus pay a sort of high homage to his excellence. Otherwise why do we make such a song of a Tagore, a Vivekananda or a Gandhi? Because of their unique qualities which they

exhibited in life and the marvellous appeal they had to the common man. There is self surrender in the act of imitation. This self surrender on the part of the worshipped and thereby the world is better for an attempt at such healthy emulation by the common man to reach a higher ideal. Even the gods do not, I believe, share the moralists' point of view regarding flattery, as they are only disposed to shower blessings on man after receiving adequate praise and worship from him. We see people kneeling in churches and burying their faces in their hands devoutly begging for favours and making pilgrimages to please their saints. Such worshipful praise moves even the hearts of anchorites.

Coming to the intimate relations of married and family life you can more easily control and quieten an unruly youngster who makes a disturbing noise by a "Darling, you are such a good boy. Please do stop making that noise" than by a frown. The little fellow suddenly feels that he is good or perhaps better than what he is and gives you relief. The same thing holds good in case of women. A little flattery acts as a sedative and a stimulant. A happy "Cheer up, sweetheart" or "You have made me happy, honey" helps greatly to brighten the tired look of a wife. It is never out of place even if you happen to be a Darby and she a Joan. It helps to bring back a host of dear memories of green lanes, sunny skies, eager meetings and hot kisses and suddenly brighten up the drab familiarity of a well nigh exhausted married life. It warms

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up one's heart to see that there is still a fugitive spark in the fallen ashes of the grape. Like a sudden beam of slanting light from the disappearing sun it touches one up with its glow and illuminates the room in which one lives. I am reminded of a beautiful incident in Disraeli's married life which was a singularly happy one. It is recorded in his biography that his devoted wife on a memorable night after a stormy but successful House of Commons debate was waiting for him outside in her brougham to give him the much needed refreshment of his favourite cake and bottle of

sherry. Disraeli after partaking of the refreshments felt pleased and said to her, "My dear, you are more like a mistress to me than a wife!" The compliment is as beautiful as it is Disraelian. She felt really proud of it and it is said that she repeated it to her friends to say how much she valued it from her 'Dizzy'.

It requires a suavity of nature and quick perception to give praise at the proper moment. Ill-timed praise or flattery falls on the ear like hollow sound. The same, well timed, comes tinkling like music and soothes the ear and touches the soul. We have a great many such beautiful instances in the olden days which were spacious and courtly and full of colour and pageantry.

The Elizabethan age blossomed in such an atmosphere of unforgettable splendour and gave us a Shakespeare, a Ben Jonson, a Spencer and a host of writers in song and prose who hold us still in their thrall. Queen Elizabeth I, as the centre and symbol of such an age was full of sprightly wit and graceful talk. Once it is said that she went on a visit to one of her nobles, Sir Nicholas Bacon. When she came to his house and found it too small she said, "My lord, what a little house you've gotten!"

He answered, "Madam, the house is well, but it is you who are made too great for the house." Who can say that flattery hath not its uses?

LAST STRAW

The Australian farmer came back, puffing and blowing, and threw the rake in the corner.

"Good Heavens, Dad!" cried his wife. "Why did you want to chase that poor man off the farm like you did?"

"Reason enough," growled the farmer. "I've just had to buy you that hat and dress, and I had to buy Daisy a present for her birthday, and I had to buy a new suit for David because he's gone crazy on that Burke girl. I had to buy a new set of harness for the buggy, and a cow rug for Strawberry, and I had to buy a licence for the dog—"

"Yes, but what has that got to do with it?"

"That fellow asked me if I wanted to buy something for the mosquitoes!"

*

*

*

Back from a sight-seeing holiday in Egypt, a woman tourist was showing her souvenirs. "I bought that scarab from an Arab boy, who assured me he had stolen it himself during excavations in the temple," she said. "I'm sure it must be genuine, because the boy had such an honest little face."

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One great cause of dissatisfaction in the world is not liking to work and not being able to avoid it.

*

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*

The highest wisdom is to do good.

COURTESY PLEASE

SWAMI SRIDANANDA

In one of his previous incarnations Lord Buddha was born as a bull-calf in the palace of the king of Rajageh. The little bull was made over to a Brahmin as a gift. The bull grew up into a lusty beast under the protection of its master. The Brahmin was very proud of it. The good man did not grudge spending a large slice of his poor income for the upkeep of his pet. It was a strange animal. One day the bull accosted the Brahmin and said, "Master, go thou to the market place and announce that I will drag fifty carts fully loaded with paddy at a time, unaided and alone. If anybody challenges please accept the challenge."

The Brahmin was beside himself with joy. He hastened to the public place and made the proclamation as directed by the bull. The challenge was accepted. The people said that he would forfeit the whole quantity of paddy if the bull could not perform such a feat. The Brahmin accepted the challenge.

The following day people thronged in thousands at the market place to witness the mighty performance of the bull. A chain of fifty carts loaded with paddy was put on the road. The bull was yoked to the train of carts. The appointed hour drew near. The mob waited with bated breath. Then the Brahmin strutted proudly towards the bull with a whip in his hand and shouted to the animal: "Thou

ass of a bull! Thou hast eaten me out of house and home. If thou art true to thy salt, O brute, drag thou these carts and fetch me a reward!"

No sooner had those uncharitable words fallen on the ears of the bull than its heart sank within itself. The cold manner of the Brahmin had frozen its limbs. Try hard as it might, its limbs would not move. The Brahmin was enraged. But anger was of no avail against the broken spirits of the animal. At last, humiliated and broken-hearted, the Brahmin retired.

The next day the bull said to the Brahmin, "Master, courtesy please! Impoliteness is ungentlemanliness. Yesterday I was hit hard by thy behaviour. I could not oblige thee inspite of myself. Once more I want to help thee. This time thou shalt bet for five hundred cartloads."

Preparations were ready for a second show. The Brahmin approached the bull, patted it on its back and very affectionately said, "My son, behold thou the vast concourse of people. They expect to see thee perform a great feat of strength. Do thou please rise to the occasion and fulfil their expectation by dragging these carts. God speed you!"

The bull at once responded. The carts moved and the Brahmin was amply rewarded. Then he realised that even the Vedas cannot help one who is devoid of good manners.

ON PUT - POCKETING

N. GANGA RAM, M. A.

A representative of a well known newspaper, who recently undertook *pada yatra* to Navina Ramarajya and stayed there for a couple of days, describes a wonderful experience of put-pocketing (as opposed to pick-pocketing) which he came across in that state.

On the evening of this delightful visit there the journalist was pushing his way through one of the crowded and busy streets, stopping now and then to gape at the marvellously displayed shop-windows. As he reached the end of the street he felt a little tired and to cheer up he casually inserted his hand into his jibba pocket to take out his snuff-box when lo! he felt something smooth and velvety. Perplexed, he hurriedly took it out--only to find out that it was a beautiful purse filled with currency notes and coins to the value of Rs. 241.15! A neatly printed note which was also found in the purse said that the gift was with the best compliments of the Thyagis Association of the Navina Ramarajya.

Naturally the newshound was a-thirst to gather information regarding the novel association. On making discreet enquiries, he came to understand that the organization of the put-pockets was the brainwave of a quandom pick-pocket whose turnover, until the day of his reformation, was

said to have exceeded Rs. 2,500/- on some field days. The ace pick-pocket happened to pick the pocket of a poor wage-earner and also chanced to see the agony he underwent. Strangely enough it touched his heart. He was immensely ashamed that he should have fattened on the fruits of other men's toil, and he made a vow then and there that he would never again pick a pocket in his life. It was in that penitent hour that he got the inspiration to start Thyagis Association.

The association was open to all who, like the founder, regretted their past actions and mode of life and vowed that thereafter they would earn their living the honest way by the sweat of their brow. It was obligatory on the part of the members to donate with a full heart a good slice of their earnings past and present, to the association which would arrange to put velvety purses containing varying sums of money into the pockets of those who were poor and in great need of money. This putting business was done by the members during their spare time, who because of their "nimble" fingers were most qualified to do the job. They were, of course, given a brief course of lectures accompanied by practical demonstration as to how to spot out men in need and skilfully put purses into their

pockets.

Was there any justification for such an association? Should the association resort to put-pocketing? Will it not do if it straightaway gave all the money donated by the members to some charitable organization? The founder of the association, it was stated, did not believe in charities and trusts. "Why," he said, "it's elementary that we should resort to put-pocketing. If one gives away money straightaway there is no thrill in it. Just as you feel thrilled when you find that you have won a first prize in a lottery so also you feel greatly thrilled when you find suddenly that a well filled purse had been put in your pocket. Normally speaking you can make out from one's appearance whether one is poor or not. Appearances, they say, are deceptive. And once in a way we may go wrong. But our members are so thoroughly trained that they rarely go wrong! The beginners first start practising on Class III and Class IV employees of the Government, and put purses!"

Mind you, these put-pockets conduct themselves very cleverly and never show themselves out; otherwise all the thrill will be lost. There is another reason also why one has to be discreet and clever. Sometimes the put-pockets are mistaken for pick-pockets if they happen to get caught in the act. In such cases they quietly go to the police station where they produce their identification cards bearing the signature of the founder of the association. The police officer verifies the signature with the



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specimen signature recorded with him and if found okay releases the member. But thereafter such members are prohibited by the association to put purses. This regulation, it will be appreciated, prevents put-pockets from being easily recognised. But the only snag about the working of this laudable philanthropic association is the professional pick-pockets (even Navina Ramarajya is not free from these nimble-fingered fraternify) do not hesitate to pick the purses put by the association members.

It is comforting, however, to note that the research panel of the association is now trying to perfect a novel zip-like device which while allowing the putting of purses in the pockets will not permit anything to be taken out unless a safety button hidden somewhere in the apparel is first pressed.

It is doubtful whether the put-pocketing idea will spread beyond the borders of Navina Ramarajya, but the days of the pick pockets are definitely numbered!

WHAT A DIFFERENCE!

"You never realize how the human voice can change," said a husband to his friend, "until a woman stops quarrelling with her husband and answers the telephone."

*

Think individually and do not let your mind be a looking glass for the minds of others.

*

Day by day, hourly, always remind yourself that in you lies the power able to conquer all things—the golden link in the chain between God and man. Make this your own belief, make it a part of your real self and you will be surprised at the change it will work in you in being as in doing.

*

THE SPINSTER

"Cats my dear!" said the spinster. "I hate the very sight of them. I had a sweet little canary and some cat got that. I had a perfect parrot and some cat got that. I had an adorable fiance once, and—oh, don't mention cats to me!"

*

THE HINT

An after-dinner speaker had talked for fifteen minutes.

"After partaking of such a meal," he rambled on, I "feel that if I had eaten any more I would be unable to talk."

From the far end of the table came an order to a waiter : "Give him a sandwitch."

*

Alimony is a payment that can be avoided either by staying single or staying married.

THE SPUTNIKS

VELANDAI

His Holiness Sankaracharya of Kamakoti Peetam expounded eternal vedic truths amidst the din of the modern sputnik age in one of his recent Madras lectures. He emphasised the fact that Saivism or Vaishnavism or any other system of Hindu religious thought, had the vedas as its basis. The vedas represented the cumulative wisdom of the ages. In the stream of Veda Neri, or Vedic Dharma, the various systems of religious thought are like bathing ghats. The principles enunciated by the vedas are elucidated in stories and in simple songs which used to be sung in olden days by every house-wife while at work. The children who listened to the stories or heard the songs used to get soaked in the vedic spirit unconsciously. Times have changed and those wholesome traditions have begun to disappear.

It is being argued in some quarters, His Holiness said, as to why we should continue to hug these ancient ways when science has advanced so much as to enable man to create artificial satellites and to make them go round the earth. But such people ignore the fact that all these material advancements are of no avail when there is no peace within oneself. What is the use of the entire world to a man, if in the process of acquiring it, he loses his soul? It is



also worth remembering that the country which has created the sputnik is also getting the Mahabharata translated and that this great Indian epic is being taught in the schools even though religion is not. It will not be a surprise if the Russians begin to treasure the Mahabharata with great enthusiasm.

The vedic religion commanded the allegiance of millions of people in spite of the absence of propaganda or missionary institutions to propagate it. It is the example of great men who lived that religion that sustained the faith of the people. Good men who had attained to a high level of *jnana*, won universal

respect of the caste in which they were born.

Godliness and love for all are the qualities by which the greatness of a person is judged. So long as such men continue to illuminate the dark corners of the heart, the vedic religion will wield its influence not only in this country but outside also. It is only when we regularly and faithfully practice the *anushthana* enjoined upon us, that society can produce outstanding persons of the type mentioned earlier. If even one in a thousand rises to great heights by such *anushthanas*, it will be a gain to society and a strength to our religion.

Our religion has grown and spread through the spiritual influence of perfected souls. Even in the recent past persons like Kabirdas and Masthan Saheb have been influenced by vedic thought. Threats from disturbing elements need not detract us from doing what is right. Trouble may come if it is His will. Do not floods and epidemics take a heavy toll occasionally? The oppression of Aurangazeb produced a Sivaji and an Ahalya Bai. God is both *bhayakrit* and *bhayanasana*. Therefore we need not feel disturbed. Whatever happens will be for our good. We must act in faith God's will be done. If each of us performs the *anushthana* prescribed for him, the cumulative effect of the *anushthanas* of all will be the welfare of society. One does his religious duty in the

interest of all. In order that each may do his part well, different duties have been prescribed for different persons. The *anushthana* prescribed for one is neither superior to nor inferior than that prescribed for another. On the other hand, one who is enjoined to do *bhajan* only, may reach the ultimate goal earlier than another who has to perform elaborate rituals. Therefore mutual respect and mutual love should prevail in society. The man doing devoutly the *anushthana* prescribed for him will be the true soldier of vedic religion.

The ignorance of western scholars in dubbing Hindu religion as polytheistic is pitiable. The uniqueness of our religion lies in the fact that under whatever name a devotee worships his *Ishtheadevata*, he considers Him as the all-prevading Paramatma. Hindu is polytheistic. In fact the culmination of the conception of the Supreme is monism. That is, Advaita vedanta, Isvara, Narayana and Parashakti—are all different aspects of the one supreme Being. That is illustrated in the divine form of Ardhanariswara and Sankara Narayana. Such manifestations of the Divine are to be seen in many South Indian temples such as Ardhanariswara at Trichengode, Sankaranarayana at Sankaran Kovil in Tirunelveli, and Harihar in Mysore. It is significant that in the temple at Tiruppakkadal near Kaveripakkam Siva and Vishnu are found together.

“My husband and I both like the same things,” Mrs. Brown told her friend. “But it took him twelve years to learn.”

C. R. DAS

V. G. RAMACHANDRAN, M.A., B.L

Few Indian lawyers have earned such renown as the late C. R. Das, the indefatigable fighter politician, parliamentarian and lawyer. In his days he was a towering personality in Indian politics and an outstanding success in the legal world as well. His robust nationalism, his sincerity of purpose and forensic ability all carved him out as the veritable hero of the masses. C R Das in Bengal and the late S. Satyamurthy of Madras had one thing in common. They knew to fight the English bureaucrat at his own game in politics through the constitutional arena of the Legislature

It was in the Alipore Bomb Case that C R Das made a great name and fame. We had already adverted to some aspects of the case while dealing with Aurobindo Ghose in Mr. Norton's conduct of the prosecution in the said case. Altogether about 55 witnesses were examined, the enquiry before the Magistrate having taken nearly 76 days. Thirty one accused, among whom were Barindra Kumar Ghose and his brother Aurobindo, then a professor, were arraigned for offences under section 121, 121 A, 122, 123, of the Indian Penal Code. C. R Das defended the accused Aurobindo and he had a

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giant to face in Mr. Norton, the special prosecutor. The argument turned on the connotation of the word 'sweets' in an incriminating letter. The prosecution weaved out a case that the word 'sweets' meant 'bombs.' C. R. Das put up an able defence argument. He said to Mr. C. P. Beachcroft, I. C. S., Additional Session Judge at Alipore :

Your Honour will find that having regard to the circumstances as disclosed in the evidence of this case, Your Honour cannot accept the document as being in the handwriting of Barindra Kumar Ghose, or that it was sent to Aurobindo Ghose. What does it show? The letter is supposed to have been written by one brother to another at Surat. Therefore if this letter is genuine both the brothers were at Surat at that time. I submit that it

is utterly improbable, assuming that both the brothers are conspirators, that one brother should write to another brother in this way. There they could have talked to each other, explained their thoughts—each to the other—without waiting at all. The letter states, 'We must have sweets all over India ready made for emergency. I wait here for your answer.' The case for the prosecution is that Barin used to address Aurobindo as 'shejda'. Did Barin forget this when writing this letter? He writes 'Dear brother'. In this country no younger brother would write to any elder brother as 'Dear brother' except to the eldest brother.

Judge : What do they write ?

C. R. Das : Mejda, Shejda, etc. The fact that both the brothers



SRI RANJANI, Rushyendramani and others in Bharat Productions'
Vikramadithan to be released shortly

being at Surat, Barin wrote to Aurobindo is extremely improbable.

I draw Your Honour's attention to the fact that Barin signs as 'Barindra Kumar Ghose'. My learned friend says that Aurobindo and Barindra are Europeanised. But Barin came to India at the venerable age of one year. I left England fifteen years ago. I do not know whether the

custom has changed there. But when I was in England I noticed that a brother never set out his full name when writing to another brother.

Judge: I would not put my full name. I would omit my surname.

C. R. Das: Nobody would sign like that considering the probabilities I submit that when a brother desires to communicate

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something to another brother, the proper form of signing his name is not to give the full name like Barindra Kumar Ghose. This sweets letter is taken with Aurobindo and treasured down. It is taken to different places in the Bombay Presidency. It is brought to Calcutta back again. It is kept at 23 Scotts Lane for a couple of months and the police are lucky enough to find the letter at 48 Grey Street. It is grossly improbable. I submit that under the circumstances Your Honour will hesitate to accept this as evidence and proof against Aurobindo Ghose.

C. R. Das later at the final address in defence of Aurobindo Ghose made a remarkable forensic hit. "I must thank Your Honour and gentlemen assessors for the very kind and patient hearing you have given me throughout this case. My only wish was that the task might have fallen on other hands to place this case before the court; but as it fell on my hands, I did all I possibly could to place the evidence in this case before the court in a connected form . . . Your Honour will find that my learned friend's case is that Aurobindo is the head of this conspiracy. He has credited Aurobindo with vast intellectual attainments and with vast powers of organisation and his case was that he was directing this conspiracy and was working from behind. Now it is with reference to this that I make my submission before Your Honour, that having regard to the nature of the conspiracy which has been established by the evidence, if it has been



N. T. Rama Rao and Padmini in
M. A. V. Pictures' *Sampurna
Ramayanam* now running all over
South

established at all, it is impossible that Aurobindo could even have believed that conspiracy was likely to succeed. If you say that Aurobindo is not gifted with the intellectual powers with which you have credited him, that is another matter My friend has referred to the thousand and one ramifications of that conspiracy and he has argued that there was a conspiracy from Calcutta to Tuticorin and other places and in order to substantiate this vast conspiracy as it were, he has not hesitated to bring a charge of conspiracy against persons of whom there is not the slightest evidence or record to show that they were in any way connected with it. I want you to disregard all that; the conspiracy is in my learned friend's (Mr. Eardley Norton's) imagination If the Government takes into its head to believe that there is a vast conspiracy which is threatening the

stability of the government, it is common knowledge that you do come across spies who give false evidence. I shall just read a passage from a book written by an eminent judge. ‘The Government under those circumstances have spies who wriggle into the case, eavesdrop into families, abstract correspondence and forge letters.’ Therefore the evidence given before you is evidence that you can expect in a case like this.”

C. R. Das then dealt with the wealth of details in testimony and finally made this fervent peroration. “My appeal to you, therefore, is that a man like this who is being charged with the offences imputed to him stands not only before the bar in this court but stands before the bar of the High Court of History and my appeal to you is this. That long after this controversy is hushed in silence, long after this turmoil, this agitation ceases, long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and reechoed, not only in India, but across distant seas and lands The time has come for you, sir, to consider your judgment and for you gentlemen, (the jury) to consider your verdict. I appeal to you sir, (the judge) in the name of all the traditions of the English Bench that forms the most glorious chapter of English history To you gentlemen (the jury) I appeal in the name of the very ideal Aurobindo preached and in

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the name of all the traditions in our country ; and let it not be said that two of his own countrymen were overcome by passions and prejudices and yielded to the clamour of the moment.”

The verdict was at long last given Aurobindo was acquitted along with sixteen others. But Barindra and others were sentenced.

C. R. Das won a doughty battle. He was verily called the Lion of Bengal. Probably this was said of his political status. But it will be equally true to say that he was tallest of the Bar of Bengal in those days.

THE SPINNING ATOM

Yet another fundamental discovery regarding matter is announced. It is that the electrons not only spin round the nucleus like the planets round the sun but also spin on their axis like the earth!

That the electron may have this property was suggested many years ago to explain a small detail in the spectrum of atoms which stood in the way of a satisfactory understanding of the atom's constitution. But it was recently proved to be true and this basic knowledge has, it is stated, resulted in extending the range of radio telescopes a thousand times. This will help scientists to probe into the distant horizon of the universe and wrest its secret and find out how it is constantly being created afresh!

"I think," says a scientist, "we can expect discoveries as far reaching and important as those of electricity and atomic energy, or the invention of the airplane and the radio, all in the next half century."

○ ○ ○

Blood Serum

The beginning of a new era in medical history is predicted by a remarkable discovery which enables doctors to detect all types of diseases before they actually manifest themselves in the body.

Studies in Johns Hopkins University have shown that each disease produces its own charac-

teristic patterns of blood serum fractions. This means that medical science has at last a universal diagnostic blood test to detect the presence of disease in its early, and hence more often curable, stages.

The blood of normal persons contains three specific types of mucoids in certain proportions. The pattern of these mucoids in the serum changes with each specific abnormal condition, each disease manifesting itself in a characteristic pattern of these mucoids.

The diseases studied so far included rheumatic fever, kidney diseases such as nephrosis and nephritis, tuberculosis, heart disease, four types of cancer and three types of mental disease. In all these cases the mucoid pattern was characteristic of the disease and by studying the pattern of mucoids the diseases can be detected and treated before actually they manifest themselves in clinical symptoms.

○ ○ ○

Sun Spots

Those who have a penchant for figures may read this with profit.

The sun spot activity for February and March was the greatest observed since 1612. What these solar fireworks mean can be understood from the following:

For example, on Feb 1956, the sun suddenly "blew its top" and shot a tongue of flaming gas

into space equal in violence, according to official estimate at the time, to 100 million hydrogen bombs exploding all at once. As much as one billion tons of the sun's gases, mostly hydrogen, were expelled at the speed of 700 miles per second, or more than 2,500,000 miles per hour.

That flare started as a bubble of gas that expanded at the rate of 60 miles per second. It grew steadily more brilliant for five to ten minutes. Then suddenly a top knot of the bubble sped up 700 miles per second. This knot, about 20,000 miles in diameter shot out for a distance of 200,000 miles before it became too faint to see. The force to produce this sudden acceleration, it was calculated, was more than 1,000

times the pull of the earth's gravity.

o o o **World's Water Resources**

A panel of experts has made an interesting and valuable recommendation to the United Nations. It has been suggested that a special office or unit be established within the world organization to begin a massive study of the use of the world's water resources. Many of the problems are international in character, especially where streams cross national boundaries or form them. A first objective would be the settlement of international disputes over waterways and water rights.

This, however, is only the beginning, writes the *New York*

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SILVER) ARTICLES ALSO UNDERTAKEN.

Times The panel declares that several hundred billion dollars will be spent within the next half century in the development of water resources. The use of water as a source of power and a means of irrigation is nothing new. It has been part of the progress of civilization for many millenia. But we are coming more and more to realize that efforts have not always been wisely expended and that returns have been less than could have been wished or even confidently expected. There is still much to learn and we need to learn it.

The development of new sources of power such as atomic or solar energy may make it p. s-

sible to put water to work in somewhat different ways. The conversion of sea water, for example, in which rapid strides are now being made, opens up a whole new vista of possibilities. As water tables in many areas are being lowered through increased usage the development of new sources of supply becomes imperative. Sea water is one of those sources.

The United Nations can have a big field for study and operation. If it can help to settle some conflicts so much the better. If it can be a leading and guiding force in the world-wide study of water use it will have made an immense contribution to human welfare.

TWO POINTS OF VIEW

"I maintain that people who do not vote at elections ought to be fined!" stormed a man in a pub.

"Oh, I don't know," smiled his friend. "Sometimes I feel those who did vote ought to be fined."

"He is quite content to lead a hand-to-mouth existence—provided it is somebody else's hand."

"I hate secrets. Either they're too good to keep, or not worth keeping."

"Jones is a cheat, and I'm not playing golf with him again."

"How's that?"

"Well, how could he find his lost ball on the edge of the green when it was in my pocket?"

THE RUB

"Didn't you enjoy the party, Mac?" asked a friend the next day.

"No. I did not."

"What was wrong?"

"There are two kinds of people at every party; those who want to leave and those who don't—and the trouble is that they are usually married to each other."

CRISIS IN FILM INDUSTRY

The film industry in India is facing a grave crisis. Never in its long history of over fifty years has the industry been confronted with such a serious situation as that at present. And the most painful part of it is that the crisis has been brought about by the Government by just a stroke of their pen!

South Indian producers feel that the cut of 60 per cent in the import of raw films will paralyse the industry which has been steadily built up by private enterprise. It is to-day the second largest industry in India and any cut in the import of raw films will mean large scale unemployment with its consequent unpleasant after effects.

Sri B. Nagi Reddy of Vijaya Productions and chief of Vauhini Studios, the biggest studio in the

east, has placed before the public some telling facts. Here they are:

1. India ranks second only to U. S. in the world in film production. And in India itself, it is the second largest industry, the first being the textile industry.

2. Madras now occupies the pride of place as the biggest film producing centre in India, having wrested this position from Bombay, which had wrested it from Calcutta.

3. The Government derives income from this industry in the shape of (i) Entertainment tax (ii) Show tax, (iii) Income-tax and (iv) Super tax. Through the first two taxes, Government takes away Rs 350 of every Rs. 1,000 collected at the theatres, and this without any effort on their part. The theatres collect and remit

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the revenue. In the whole country the industry pays about Rs. 12 crores in the shape of taxes.

4. In Madras 90 per cent of the proceeds of the entertainment tax is allotted to Panchayats and Municipalities. This revenue forms 30 per cent of the total revenue of the Panchayats. For collecting the remaining 70 per cent of the proceeds the film companies spend 60 per cent on the cost of collection, including salaries to staff

5. The Government also derives revenue in the shape of freight on films, posters, etc., transported by rail.

6. The actors and actresses, distributors and exhibitors also pay tax to the Centre on their incomes from the industry.

7. According to a U. S. Commerce Department survey, 276 professions and arts are connected directly or indirectly with the film industry. A few of them are printing, publishing, process (block) making, tailoring, painting, music and dancing. These arts and professions flourish because of the industry and, they in turn, swell the Government's revenue.

8. Raw film is not at present produced in this country hence, there is no alternative to importing it from abroad. Every year two crores rupees worth of raw film is imported.

9. But it is wrong to think that this is so much drain on our foreign exchange resources. While we import raw film, we, at the same time, export finished pictures to Ceylon, Burma,

Malaya, Siam and Indonesia, to countries in the Middle East and to South Africa. The foreign exchange earned by this export is more than what is spent on the import of raw film.

10. Our film technicians have mastered the intricacies of the art by their own efforts, without going to any school or college. Some 60 per cent of these self-reliant people will lose their living as a result of Government's policy. Indeed, more than half the number of people in the industry will have to retire, if production falls. The masses will also be denied re-creation at low cost.

11. For the film producer himself, this is an unmerited blow. He abides absolutely by all rules and regulations. Not an inch of any picture goes out of the studio unless it is passed by the Board of Censors.

12. It may be argued that the cut in raw film import does not affect established producers. But what of new comers? Fresh blood is essential for a growing art. Government's policy will discourage fresh entrants and strike a blow on the head of those coming into the field with new ideas.

13. Does the Government have an animus against the cinema? If that is so, it can end it by a fiat instead of subjecting it to slow death by torture. But then the Government itself encourages the industry by awards and certificates. What is behind this "Jekyll and Hyde" policy? Why nurse the baby with one hand and crush it with another?

RECENT CHANGES IN THE TAX STRUCTURE

N. A. PALKHIVALA

1757 and 1857 were historic years in the history of India. 1957 witnessed a landmark, not in the political history of this country, but in its economic and taxation laws. We have, almost without realising it, passed through a revolution so far as taxation laws are concerned. We are perhaps far too near it to realise the full implications of what has recently happened, but history may note 1957 as the most important year in the history of the taxation laws of this country.

Among the new taxes, we have the Wealth-tax, the Expenditure-tax and the Capital Gains tax. On a plain and grammatical construction of the Wealth-tax Act, 1957, it is not possible to submit, in many cases, a statement of net wealth as required by the Act and state on oath that it is correct. The reason is that in the charging section—(Section 3)—the charge is levied on net wealth; 'net wealth' is defined by Section 2 (m) as the excess of the value of assets over liabilities, and the 'value of an asset' is defined by Section 7 as "the price which in *the opinion of the Wealth tax Officer* it would fetch if sold in the open market on the valuation date". Since you do not know who will be your Wealth tax Officer, or what will be his subjective opinion regarding the value of

your assets, you do not know what in his opinion will be the extent of your wealth, and consequently in respect of matters like jewels and houses where subjective valuation by different persons may give different results. You cannot truthfully say on oath that what you have submitted is the 'net wealth' as defined by the Wealth tax Act. What you submit to the Wealth-tax Officer is merely your prediction as to what in his opinion your assets would have fetched in the open market at the valuation date.

The Wealth-tax is founded on the theory that one of the main objects of taxation is not merely to bring more revenue to the State but to reduce the disparity between wealth and poverty. But expropriation by the State would achieve the same result and where you have a situation like the present one, where the wealth-tax and the income-tax between themselves swallow up the entire income of an assessee and leave no part of the income to the assessee to be spent on himself, the law may be rightly described as a law virtually entailing expropriation under the guise of taxation.

An assessee under the Wealth-tax Act must have a valuation made of all his assets every year. That process is fairly simple when one deals with shares and securities but it is a difficult

process when you deal other assets like houses and jewels. One wonders how many assessee would put themselves to the trouble and expense, as technically and strictly speaking they should, of trying to ascertain the correct market value of various assets other than shares and securities on each valuation date. Perhaps it was to relieve the assessee of that bother that the Legislature enacted that the value is to be what it is in the opinion of the Wealth-tax Officer, so that an assessee may make a fair estimate of what the normal mentality of tax officers in India is and on that basis try to ascertain what the officer is likely to take the assets to be worth. In respect of all conceivable assets from bangles to buildings, the omniscient Wealth-tax Officer is supposed to know the true value and his opinion would decide how much wealth-tax you should pay.

The expenditure-tax is a novel mode of taxation and it is one of the ironies of history that a nation which has so little to spend should be the first to levy a tax on expenditure. You first pay income-tax on the income you earn ; when you spend it you again pay excise duty, sales tax, etc., which taxes are always passed on to the consumer, and thereafter at the end of the year you again pay expenditure-tax on what you have spent.

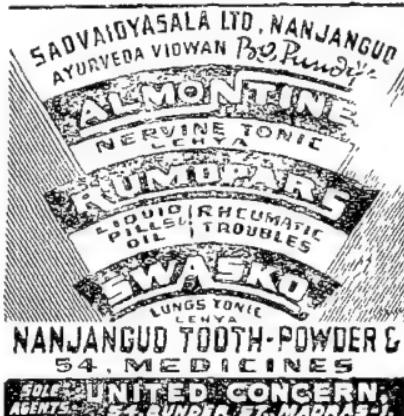
Two justifications have been pleaded in support of the expenditure-tax :—first, that it is necessary to make the scheme of taxation water-tight and, secondly, that it discourages

ostensible expenditure. In reality, instead of making the scheme water-tight the wealth-tax and the expenditure-tax may only provide two more incentives to suppression of income. Till 1957 if you suppressed your income you avoided one kind of tax. Now by suppressing it you can also avoid the expenditure-tax if you choose to save the income. So a tax levy which is intended to make the scheme of taxation water-tight may only make the nation more saturated and dripping with tax evasion. Just as recovery under the Estate Duty Act was not what it was expected to be, in all probability the expenditure-tax and the wealth-tax will not achieve the results they are expected to achieve either by way of recovery of tax or by way of prevention of tax evasion.

The second justification for the expenditure-tax is the object set out in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, viz., to discourage ostensible expenditure. Ostensible expenditure is hardly indulged in on any wide scale in this country. Even without the expenditure-tax, in a few years' time ostensible expenditure would become as extinct in this country as the dodo or the mastodon. You do not need a novel tax, tried in the history of mankind, in order to discourage what is not a widespread evil. Apart from the fact that reckless expenditure is hardly a public evil in India, there are economic consequences of restricting expenditure which merit serious consideration. In the United States, the most prosperous country in the world, more than

75% of all purchases are effected on credit; people buy goods which they have no means of paying for at the moment of purchase. That is understood to promote the economic prosperity of the nation. In India, we are now seeking to go in the contrary direction and discourage people from spending even within their means. The excise and customs duties are already a strong deterrent to purchase of those goods which can procure for us foreign exchange by being exported abroad. And you certainly do not need the expenditure-tax to achieve the same result.

Certain allowances are given in respect of expenditure for certain purchases and, therefore, the Expenditure-tax Officer would be entitled to go into the question as to the purpose for which the expenditure was incurred! Thus, what you spend, what you save, and what you give are to become the subject of scrutiny by the State authorities. This regimentation, this control over the private affairs of individuals, is something against which all-lovers of liberty will always rebel. The only difficulty is that this type of rebellion creates no effect in the governmental quarters because it does not result in the burning of tramcars or the stoning of automobiles. If you have a proposal to levy a negligible additional excise duty on tea or sugar, you have riots and civil commotion and the proposal to levy the tax is promptly dropped. If you have the levy of wealth-tax on companies, which is in fact more irrational



than the additional excise duty on tea or sugar, the tax is still persisted in because there are no violent demonstrations of public antipathy. That is a very unfortunate aspect of the working of democracy in India. It would be a true democracy where the Executive is as responsive to intellectual arguments as to manifestations of lawlessness and violence.

Even if the expenditure-tax fails, it is unlikely that it will be scrapped in the near future. Questions of pride and prestige will come in; and the second factor which goes to prolong the life of bad fiscal measures is the fact that what brings revenue to the State, in however small measure, is very seldom dropped. It is interesting to note that income-tax, than which few things are more certain in this world, was itself introduced as a very temporary measure for only one year. It was William Pitt who during the time of the Napoleonic war introduced income-tax honestly believing that it was going to be levied for only one year. That is why the rates were prescribed by the annual Finance Act. The historic accident of the rates being prescribed by the

annual Finance Act continues even today when the tax is as permanent as the Ellora caves.

The third tax, the capital gains tax, may not present much of a problem in many cases, because the Government has been thoughtful enough to give to the nation two other taxes, the wealth-tax and the expenditure-tax, which will militate against any appreciable capital appreciation. The main objection to the capital gains tax is concerned with the effect which it produces on the economy of the country. At a time when we need more capital for our industries, the imposition of the capital gains tax cannot be regarded as very opportune. The capital gains tax is one more portent of the growing desire of the State to tax not wisely but too well.

THE CAT

"Yes my Albert is one in a hundred," boasted the teenage college girl.

"Really? How do you manage to keep him from knowing about the other 99?" asked a friend.

"Any hint of marriage yet, dear?"

"Several. He just ignores them."

"How did you cure your stammer?"

"I put a three-minute 'phone call to New York."

It doesn't always pay to be easy going. Everybody respects a mule because he's hasty with his hind feet.

Many a man who slips a ring on a girl's finger ends up under her thumb.

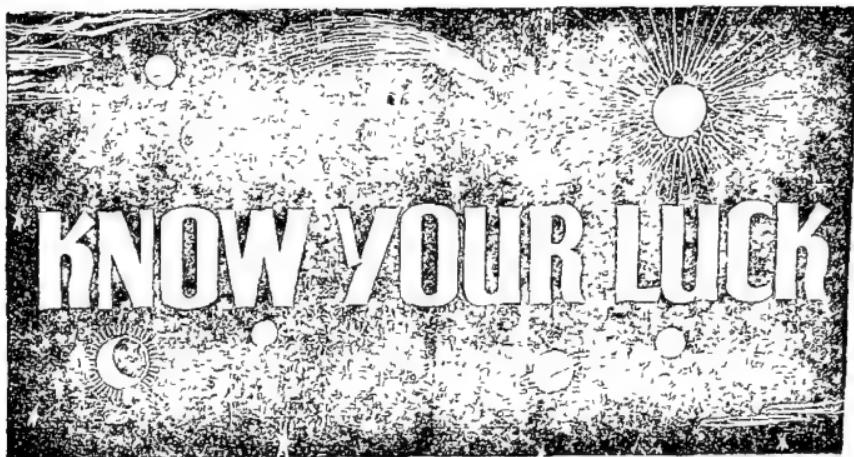
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TO WIN FRIENDS

"First thing to remember in this business of winning friends," a teacher told his class, "is that most people aren't particular how you treat them—just as long as you do."



P. V. RAO, VASUDEVAPURAM, MADRAS-5

MESHA RASI or ARIES

Planetary combinations reveal an admixture of benefic and malefic influences radiating this month. The solar course in the first two weeks may not prove as good as could be expected and it may cause you anxiety at home about children's health and depressed mental condition. Your health also may be affected owing to extra heat. But-Guru in the 7th house is a great redeeming feature minimising your difficulties to a great extent. Financially there will be greater conveniences as the month progresses. Gain through friends, societies or companies is envisaged. Your ruler passing through the 11th house aspected by the lord thereof may make more friends rally round you than before. The aspect of Sani might cause some rupture with a friend or two though nothing may eventuate consequently. Second half when the solar course is through the

second house, better results financially, socially and domestically are noticed. Source of income will improve. Gain through relations or elders may be envisaged. Eye sight in some cases may cause anxiety. Differences in the family life may arise on account of disruptive elements around you. Officially this month may prove more gainful than last month. Favour of superiors is in evidence. A journey may occur. There will be appreciation of your work by your boss. Domestic life will improve in the second half. Better amenities may be enjoyed. Merchants will find this month more lucrative than before. Partnership will improve. Foreign business will be more profitable.

1, 4, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 25, 26, 29 are better days.

VRISHABHA RASI or TAURUS

Planetary map does not reveal

$\frac{1}{2}$ Kruthika favourable results during this month comparatively. Planets in the 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th make the realisation of your cherished objectives difficult. They indicate disappointment, slow progress of your undertakings, unnecessary excitement and inquisitiveness, anxiety about your wife's health, desire for change of surroundings and lastly your disturbed health owing to improper functioning of your system. Financially, heavy expenditure is indicated though income may also be satisfactory. Second half onwards, heavier expenditure and greater conveniences of money will be evident. Friends will play a great part in your welfare in the first half. Your own relations are adversely inclined towards you.

Domestically you may not feel as happy as before because of Mangal and Surya. A change of house may be in the picture for a few. Investment is propitious during this month. You will be easily influenced by persons around you. Officially second half is more encouraging and more profitable. Your boss will be too exacting in his demands. You will have unnecessary worry in the first half officially. Merchants will do well in the first half though there may be heavy expenditure. Partnership may not be fruitful. Foreign business will be lucrative. New business connections may be established

2, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 25, 26, 29, 31 are better days.

MITHUNA RASI or GEMINI

First of this month presents

$\frac{1}{2}$ Mrigashira a rosy picture of Ardras & $\frac{1}{2}$ your life, since many Punarvasu of the planets are in

congenial alignment with your affairs of life. Surya in the 11th house should give you all that is desirable through friends and relations. A journey is envisaged. You may be helped by higher-ups either at home or in your professional field. Life is socially happy and gay. Second half might prove slightly dull comparatively. Surya's course through the 12th house might slow down the speed of your successful activities for some time. Some set back may be seen delaying the accomplishment of your cherished desires. Financially this month is more encouraging and satisfactory though the expenditure may be seen mounting higher and higher. Money may be gained through speculative business or near relations as the case may be. Your ruler enters again the house of gain viz Mesha on the 10th and is therefore expected to bring advantages and gainful positions financially and professionally too. Domestic environment will be more congenial to your interest making you 'feel more comfortable and happy in spite of heavier expenditure incurred owing to Mangal's aspect to the 12th house. Officially this is equally a good month of favour of your boss for your promotion and higher position. You will be happy in your surroundings. Merchants will have a lucky time of it during this month. Partnership will

prove lucrative. New partnership may be formed in a few cases. Foreign business will be more encouraging during this month.

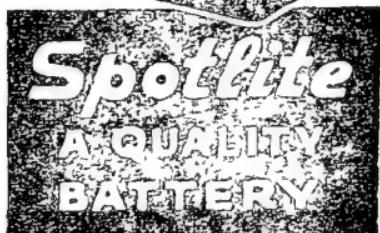
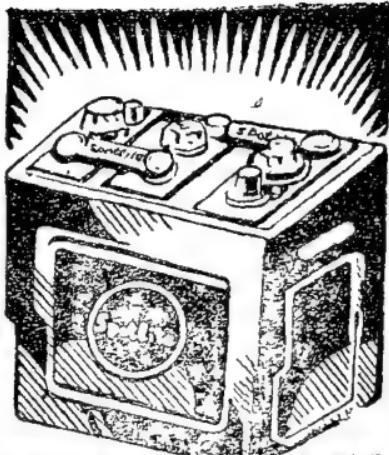
1, 2, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29 are better days.

KARKATAKA RASI or CANCER

Planetary map radiates greater
benefic influences

1. Punarvasu & Pushya & over your life during
Ashlesa this month. The solar course in the

10th house in the first half is quite encouraging in regard to your achievement professionally. You have reached a height in which you can enjoy officially more than in the past the favour of bigger magnates and influential friends and relations. The position of Sani in the 5th and Sukra in the 9th are calculated to shed greater influences on your life's activities so that you may be enjoying more popularity than ever. Second half shows better influences at work and greater achievements through friends, who may be officers, rallying round you to make your life happy and delightful. A member of your house will come up well during this month. Financially the lord of wealth is coursing through the 11th house of gain and acquisition of money and other advantages opening up new avenues of income. Your expenditure is seen mounting up increasingly and the money angle will take a new orientation in the line of your professional activities. One of your brothers will claim your special attention during this month. Domestically this month may be said to be



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happy in the first half in particular. Investment or house move may occur in a few cases. Vehicular happiness may cause a problem. Officially first half is more favourable than the second, though second half is happier in some respects. You may easily ingratiate yourself into the favour of your boss. Merchants will find this month more favourable and advantageous. Partnership may fare well in the first half in particular. Some differences may be felt amongst the partners in the first half. Any investment may better be postponed. Foreign business is prosperous.

2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18, 25, 29, 30 are better days.

SIMHA RASI or LEO

Planetary combination seems to be in no way better than last month since the major planets coupled with others are not well aligned. Your ruler Makha, Poorvaphalgunam and $\frac{1}{2}$ Uthara Phalguna

in the 9th house may bring false hopes or optimistic view of realising an important cherished object which may not very likely be accomplished in the first half. Second half is more encouraging in this respect when through the patronage and kind sympathy of your wellwishers you have a chance of coming up and realising your projected plans. Your ruler will be coursing through the 10th house viz., the house of attainment your professional aspiration. You will therefore find it easier to work and accomplish your plan then. Guru in the 2nd house from 17th is a

favourable star-turn favouring your activities with successful accomplishment. You will move in high circles and gain through people higher up in society. Mangal in the 7th may cause you to be more actively engaged and at times even get excited. An opposition may be felt during this month through your relation or an enemy of yours. Marriage alliance may be happily concluded in spite of oppositions. Financially the month may prove more convenient after the 10th when the lord of the finance enters the 9th house. Money may be gained through higher levels, distant places, banks and companies, as the case may be. Domestically the month may not be as happy owing to your own commitments. House problem may become acute during this month. A house move is envisaged in a few cases. Officially, second half is much more lucky and advantageous on account of your boss's appreciation of your work. Merchants will find first half better than the second. Partnership may be labouring under disadvantages. 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18, 26, 30 are better days.

KANYA RASI or VIRGO

Planetary alignment reveals an admixture of benefic and malefic influences. Guru, Sukra, Mangal and Surya in second half are all favourably configurated during this month indicating general welfare, financial improvement and help when-needed besides domestic comforts and other social delights. But

Surya in the 8th, Rahu in the 2nd, your lord Budha in the 8th suggest ill health, distant journey, disturbed mental peace and some unnecessary blame or accusation from others. The solar course in the 8th house may bring about enemies during the first half. Mangal in the 6th aspecting your rasi may heat your system causing excitement and quarrelsomeness in your dealings with the public. Your own brother may react against you while there is no apparent reason for this attitude on his part. You may gain through papers or records as the case may be. Financially this is in fact a better month than the last one. More money may flow in easily. You may gain through women or companies or associations. You will do pious deeds. Officially, you may hope greater encouragement and boss's favour. Your work will involve greater responsibility than before. Merchants will have a good time. More business will flow and will prove profitable. Foreign business will be prosperous.

2, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, 24, 25,
26, 29 are better days

THULA RASI or LIBRA

Planetary positions in the first half indicate your eagerness for ^½ Chitra Swathi and ^¾ Vishaka lightful social life this month. You may move in higher circles but great care is needed to avoid disturbed feelings while with them. Your general health may be disturbed on account of throat and stomach trouble. Mangal in the 5th causes stomach upset due to gastric complaint and irritation

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of the bowels. The solar course through the 7th house should make you individualistic in your work and attitude. More friends are seen in the first half. One of your near relations may come up very well to your delight. Second half may not be better than the first. Guru in the 12th, Surya in the 8th are not a happy combination causing you general anxiety as to your welfare and health. Heavy expenditure is indicated in the second half. Financially there is higher expenditure as the month is underway. First half is better for financial conveniences. Officially you may not have any encouragement. More hopes than their realisation may be your experience. Merchants will find this month more fortunate in the first half. Partnership may labour under some disadvantages or other. Speculation may not prove successful. Foreign business may fare well in the first half.

1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30 are better days.



VRISHCHIKA RASI or SCORPIO

This month is slightly better than the last one. Guru & Visbaka, though unfavourably Anuradha & Jeshta, configurated aspects your lord Mangal and 10th lord Surya in the 6th. This brings about brighter surroundings, better outlook of life, and greater encouragement in your professional activity. You will also come in contact with business magnates who will sympathise with you in your aspirations. Your Lord Mangal is coursing through 4th house gain-

ing domestic peace and comforts, besides securing practical knowledge, propitious investment on land, property or vehicle. Surya in the 6th will render powerless all those who are inimically disposed towards you. Second half may bring about some opposition in the open in which you may seem to gain. There will be friends around you then, and consequently you may accomplish many of your objects also. Financially Guru may not help you in the first half. All the same you will be optimistically inclined to realise your hopes in the second half when Guru will enter the 11th house of gain on the 17th. Avoid oppositions and friction in the 2nd half as far as possible. A happy ceremony may occur during the month. Officially first half is more promising than the second. Your aspirations will meet with impediments, since Mangal and Surya are in square with each other. Merchants will find this month more lucrative in the first half only. Expenditure is heavier in the first half. Some hidden gain here and there may be evident in the second half also.

2, 4, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30 are better days



DHANU RASI of SAGITARIUS

Planetary style provides better luck when compared with last month's. Moola, Poorvashada & Uttarashada The solar course through the 5th house and your lord Guru through the 11th house are indicative of your gain through

both official and domestic life. Surya being the lord of the 9th in the 5th house indicates that one of your children will bring about greater harmony and general prosperity. Surya in the 5th might cause your meeting with your near elder relations in the first half if not already in the last month. It may give you both physical and mental energy to grapple with your difficulties around you. Second half when Surya enters the 6th house and Guru, your ruler, in the 10th house, there will be greater satisfaction and success of your undertakings besides settlement of good many pending affairs. Your general health perhaps may not be quite good owing to functioning disorder of throat and stomach. One or two important undertakings may receive a setback temporarily. Financially planets are more favourably posited. Good income is enjoyed beside good savings during this month. Friends are seen rallying round you influencing your life to your advantage during this month. Officially, second half is more encouraging and gainful. Some old work will be thrust back on your shoulders or if you are acting in a higher grade you may be reverted to your previous job after the 17th of this month. Merchants will be lucky in their business turnover especially in the first half. Partnership will undergo slight change. Foreign business will prove encouraging
10, 12, 14, 18, 20, 24, 25, 26, 29 are good days. 24th is an important date to note.

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MAKARA RASI or CAPRICORN

Malefics flanking on both sides of your $\frac{1}{2}$ Uttarashada rasi coupled with Sravana Dhanista $\frac{1}{2}$ 8th lord exalted and coursing

through the 4th house of comfort do not indicate tranquil flow of life in the line of least resistance. They offer opposition, disappointment, differences, ill health and troubles through enemies. Guru is the only benefic planet radiating favourable influences over your affairs reducing your troubles to a minimum. Guru in the 10th may also extend a helping hand in your troubles officially as well as domestically. The solar course through the 4th house in the first half may disturb you mentally and physically. A distant journey is envisaged in the course of which you may meet your rare relations. Unwelcome news may come in the first half. Financially the month is not convenient comparatively. Second half perhaps may see greater financial activities. Avoid friction and differences with others in your financial dealings. A friend of yours may cause you unnecessary headache in financial matters. This is not a propitious period for any investment as the after effect will not be pleasant if you happen to be in it. Officially, the lord of your profession in exaltation may help you to gain some advantages. But beware of difference of opinion or adverse reaction in your relationship with your boss. Merchants will not find

this month in any way better. Unexpected developments may be envisaged. Partnership may be under strained relationship. Foreign business may improve. 1, 4, 10, 14, 16, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29 are better days.

KUMBHA RASI or AQUARIUS

Planetary positions radiate favourable influences during this month. The solar course through the 3rd house aspected by Guru, the lord of wealth, indicates greater success and congenial surroundings and successful undertakings on your part.

If your dasa bhukti radically is helpful to you, this month promises to be one of the best for your improvement and satisfaction. An elderly relation may not feel happy in his connections with you. Mangal on your rasi may make you easily credulous and overpowered by other influences around you and you must rise above the same. You will be disposed to help others and your relations more than ever. New undertakings and old ones as well will be crowned with success. Avoid being impulsive and unnecessarily excited and hasty in all your decisions and dealings with others. Financially speaking this is a better month. More income will come in easily. Investment will be propitious. Any court case will end in your favour. Any marriage connection will be easily established. Any rift between husband and wife will be narrowed down. The month

is auspicious for investing in property and house or vehicle. A house move may occur in a few cases. Officially first half is more favourable. Greater encouragement is gained through your boss. Your work will be heavy but pleasant. Merchants will be lucky in their business speculation. More income will be earned. New business deal or customers may be a special feature of the month. Partnership will fare well. Foreign business will be unusually successful.

4, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 25, 26, 29 and 30 are good days.

MEENA RASI or PISCES

Planetary combinations are not quite good for your general satisfaction. Your rasi is flanked by malefics on both sides especially in the first half. Since your ruler Guru is in the 8th house with other malefics, they indicate that you have enemies around you and that you are accused or blamed by others for no good reason and that you have a fear complex in your mind for which lapse of time is the only remedy. You may be troubled by a near relation and you may be compelled to help him when he seeks your help. First half of the month shows greater pressure of money than the second and it is likely that



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you will have gone in for a loan temporarily. Your need for money is not only for yourself but also for others around you. Your enemies are active during the first half but your relationship with them becomes cordial in the second half. Second half is more congenial and successful in your attempts. A journey is indicated. Help from relations will come in. If you are an eye patient first half will not be good for you. Your general health also may suffer. Domestically you may not be happy. Merchants will feel slightly better during this month although they may be facing financial handicaps in the first half. Partnership will have a happier change. Foreign business will become more successful in the second half.

2, 4, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29 are better days.

She had sworn to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth

"How old are you, Mrs. Rice?" asked the magistrate.

"Twenty—and some months," she smiled

"How many months?"

"Two hundred."

MISCELLANY

A miniaturised digital computer, or "electronic brain," that can fly a jet interceptor plane under all combat conditions from its take-off to its landing, has been developed by the Hughes Aircraft Company in Los Angeles, California. It is now being manufactured for immediate use.

The device, called Digitair, is not restricted to airborne military use, but could easily be adapted for use in the new supersonic jet passenger planes, the company says.

It is described as "small enough to fit into the cabinet of a very large table model radio set." Despite its small size, Digitair can make 9,600 basic arithmetical computations in one second, and render 6,250 decisions in one minute.

When in action, the device can perform all the necessary computations associated with the flight, navigation, search and attack functions of a plane on an interceptor mission. As a result, the pilot is left free to concentrate almost exclusively on the tactical decisions involved in a battle in the sky.

The Digitair computer is provided with the facts it needs for its computations by the radar of the plane in which it is carried and by coded information sent to it by ground stations. It simultaneously takes in 61 different types of information and "puts out" 30 types. In doing so it performs or monitors 16 separate navigation and flight control functions.

These include such operations as actuating the plane's control surfaces to correct pitch or roll; telling the pilot to increase or decrease his speed; maintaining a constant check on available fuel and the distance the plane can fly on it under existing conditions.

The machine also provides the pilot with the target range and tells him the proper speed and altitude to fly in order to intercept the target accurately.

"Digitair can solve more than one problem at a time," its manufacturers say. "It can be working on a navigation problem while at the same time making calculations of wind directions and speed reckoning on an enemy bomber. The computer will decide at what point to intercept and at what altitude, and will automatically fire the plane's armament."

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HIS ADVICE

Sandor Petoff, a Hungarian poet, was very poor and often had to beg coins to buy his daily roll of bread.

One day he wanted to cross a river by ferry but had nothing with which to pay his fare. Resorting to his wit, he called the ferryman aside and said: "In God's name, take me across the river.

Then, when we get to the other side, I will tell you something that will make you a rich man."

The ferryman hedged but eventually agreed. "Now, sir," he said, when they reached the other bank, "I'll have the advice that you seem incapable of acting on yourself. How do I get rich?"

"Be sure that never again do you row me or anyone else over this river for nothing," answered Sandor. "Neglect that caution, and you'll stay poor for life."

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UNIQUE SHOP

Sponsored by the Old Town Chicago Boys' Clubs is a store in Chicago with a unique reputation.

Only good deeds will purchase the goods, which range from baked beans to bicycles. Any lad wishing to buy a pair of shoes, skates, bicycle, etc., earns for himself credit tokens by doing odd jobs and running errands. When he has lodged enough credit coupons he presents them in exchange for the article required.

The store is kept going by local businessmen, who donate merchandise.

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ON WOMEN

One may easily lead a woman when the cord is composed of golden threads

A saint stands a poor chance in the race for a woman's heart against an engaging pirate, an impetuous cave man or a fascinating rogue.

Women are like shadows. Pursue them and they'll run from you ; run from them and they'll follow you.

In thousands of years Eve has learnt to perfection the art of keeping Man guessing as to her real feelings and intentions.

Those who do not know how to give orders can never give advice to a woman.

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AIR TRAVEL AND HEALTH

Last year 90,000,000 people travelled by air on scheduled flights throughout the world, compared with 2,500,000 in 1937; during 1958 the figure is expected to reach the 100,000,000 mark. This tremendous increase in air travel may soon over-tax the facilities at many international airports, not the least with regard to sanitary conditions.

This problem was discussed recently by the World Health Organization Expert Committee on Sanitation of International Airports, at its first meeting in Geneva. The International Sanitary Regulations already set up by the WHO refer expressly to the quarantinable diseases such as smallpox, cholera, yellow fever, etc., and deal with safe water supplies, disposal of waste, control of insects, rats and other disease carriers.

While recommending that air passengers must be given the best

possible hygienic protection, the WHO experts recognized that the health of crew members is even more important for safety in flight. The risk of sudden illness affecting crew members may involve emergency landings and, consequently, hazards to passengers.

The Committee proposed the publication of an international manual on airport sanitation which would give recommendation on the provision of safe drinking water and food, and good rest facilities to maintain the efficiency of crews and the comfort of passengers on international flights. Suggestions for control at airports of disease carriers such as insects and rats would also be included.

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WEATHER RESEARCH

Meteorological rockets which mount to a height of roughly 60 miles, descend by parachute and can be used again, are being launched by Soviet scientists from Kheis Island in the Arctic and from the Soviet research vessel Ob in Antarctic waters, during the International Geophysical Year.

The rocket, 23 feet in length, is fired to a height of about 45 miles where a separating motor blows the nose and body apart. Parachutes then open on the two sections : the nose continues upwards for a distance of some 10 miles, the parachute acting as a stabiliser and slowing it down as it descends to a speed of about 13 feet per second. Bayonet-like blades dig into the ground as it lands, holding the container with its load of instruments upright. The rocket body is also recovered and can be used again.

Several of these rockets have already been launched, and have provided Soviet scientists with valuable information on the distribution of air temperatures and pressures in the medium stratosphere. A special concentration of rocket firings will be made during June and July this year, as planned at the rocket conference held in Washington last autumn.

* * *

HEALTH OF PEOPLE

In the ten years since its constitution came into force on 7 April, 1948, the World Health Organisation has contributed to the well-being and happiness of millions of human beings all over the globe. The period has shown a phenomenal decline in mortality, due mainly to advances in environmental sanitation and disease control. This means that in more developed countries a new-born girl can be expected to live 4-5 years longer than ten years ago, and a new-born boy 3-4 years longer. In rapidly developing countries these figures may be as high as 11 and 10 years.

Deaths from infectious and parasitic diseases, such as cholera, typhus, smallpox, plague, relapsing fever and yellow fever, have decreased by about half. Up to 1948 malaria attacked some 300 million people each year, resulting in 3 million deaths ; these figures have been cut by 30 per cent but the disease still persists a big inter-

national health problem. Tuberculosis remains the greatest killer among infectious diseases, but in 1955 a turning point was reached with the advent of new drugs promising a revolution in its treatment.

Apart from its world-wide campaigns to combat these diseases, WHO has helped many countries to set up improved health services in maternal and child welfare, environmental sanitation, nutrition and in many other fields.

On the other hand, growing dangers to health have been revealed such as heart disease and cancer, poliomyelitis, accidents and mental diseases. Through its world-wide network, WHO helps experts to exchange information and experience and to evolve new methods of combating these threats more rapidly and effectively

* * *

A JUNGLE SAGA

A record of an ancient Indian culture which may soon disappear completely is depicted in the new Swedish colour film "A Jungle Saga", made by Sweden's documentary producer Arne Sucksdorff. The film, which took three years to make, describes life among the people of the Muria tribe in Central India

It is of particular interest as modern industry and communications are encroaching on the isolated Muria people, and the original character of their ancient community may soon be lost for ever.

* * *

WAXWORKS FOR WASHINGTON

Washington, D. C. will soon have a "wax museum" of the type made famous by Mme Tussaud. The only one of its kind in the United States, it will depict great moments in American history and display lifelike figures of Columbus, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Andrew Jackson, Henry Ford, George Washington Carver and many other men who have played an important role in the history and development of the United States. The museum will be historically accurate. For instance, Franklin D. Roosevelt is shown at Yalta with Winston Churchill and Stalin.

* * *

JAPANESE GARDEN IN PARIS

Last month a plane from Tokyo brought to Paris a small kimonoed figure with a large bundle of trees. It was Motonori Suzue, a 28-year-old gardener from Tolushima bringing a gift from the peoples of Japan for the new Unesco Headquarters in the Place de Fontenoy, Paris

The trees—magnolia, cherry, plum, bamboo—are to be planted in the garden designed by Isamu Noguchi, the Japanese American artist, sculptor and landscape gardener engaged by Unesco in agreement with the Japanese Government

It is thanks to voluntary contributions from Unesco well-

wishers in Japan that Motonori Suzue was able to leave his native village and come to Paris to help Noguchi with the garden. And it is thanks not only to the money they collected but also to their work that nearly 100 tons of decorative Japanese rocks and stones are now being put in place on the Paris site to form waterfalls, bridges, seats and boulders which will give a distinctive character to this 20th century Japanese garden.

Although he has never been to Europe before, Suzue seems completely at home on the Paris site where, with traditional Japenese tools and in his native costume, he is already at work on the garden. These types of flowering cherries will form an alley across the garden and the other trees will be scattered around the large central pond and the delegates' patio.

BOOKS In U. S.

The magazine, *Publishers Weekly* reported that 13,142 books were published in the United States during 1957. The only publication total that surpassed 1957's in this century was 1910's total of 13,470 titles. At that time, however, pamphlets were counted as books. This is true only to a limited extent today.

Three hundred and twenty two publishers with individual outputs ranging from 5 to 401 titles issued 11,566 titles, or 88 percent of 1957's total output. Leading among publishers issuing 100 or more titles were Macmillan Company with 401 titles, Harper Brothers with 349 titles and McGraw-Hill with 311 titles. They were followed by Doubleday & Company, Oxford University Press and Prentice-Hall,

Two young men saw two pretty girls meet at a railway station and embrace.

"That's what's wrong with the country," remarked one.

"What do you mean?" asked his pal.

"Women doing men's work."

In a genteel tea-room in Cheltenham, two youngish spinsters were discussing a matrimonial prospect.

"I know he's rich," said the first, "but isn't he too old to be considered?"

"My dear," replied her friend with a sigh, "he's too eligible to be considered old."

"I was a fool when I married you," grumbled a wife.

Her husband flushed with anger: "Well, don't blame me, I didn't know at the time!"

"John is so original. He says things to me that nobody else would dream of saying."

"What's he been saying now—asking you to marry him?"

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Ourselves

We have come to the end of our labour this month. It has given us great pleasure to bring out this fourth annual issue and we hope the readers are satisfied with its contents both in regard to quality and variety.

It was four years ago this month that the first issue of *Kahaniya Monthly* was placed before the public. The monthly has since then regularly appeared on the stalls on the first of every month and its sales have been steadily going up. We are thankful both to our numerous contributors and to the many advertisers who have extended their help and support to us in making this monthly a popular success.

In the fifth year of publication we hope to introduce one or two new features but there is little hope of increasing the number of pages in the ordinary issues because of the high cost of newsprint. We are averse to increase the price of 25 naye paise but we will do our best to give good value for the money.

India, after the freedom, is changing fast. Though the first Five Year Plan has not appreciably increased the average income of the people, the second and subsequent Five Year Plans are bound to result in increased prosperity all round. Foreigners who have come to the country have been greatly impressed by the remarkable progress made in the short period of a decade. It is our desire to devote in the near future a few pages to the economic and political life of the country.

We once again wish to express our thanks to all our contributors and advertisers for their co-operation and goodwill in the past and hope the same will be forthcoming in greater measure in the future.

—Editor, K.



Love Begets Love

Love begets love, service promotes the spirit of service, hatred stimulates hatred and ill will aggravates hostile feelings. Whatever you give will redound to you in an infinitely enhanced measure. You love all, and you evoke love and love alone from all sides.—*Kalyan.*

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If anyone is really prompted by his evil disposition to harm you, the remedy does not lie in paying him in his own coin. If you repay evil with evil, hatred with hatred, these unquestionably injurious and foolish thoughts obviously exist in you. By these thoughts you will only be aggravating his wickedness and hatred even as by pouring oblations into the fire you cause it to flare up. This will prove harmful both to you and to him. Your wellbeing consists in requiting his wickedness and hatred with love and good offices.—*Kalyan.*

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